When The King Came

Illustrated

George Hodges

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WHEN THE KING CAME

THE TRANSFIGURATION

WHEN THE KING CAME

Stories from the Four Gospels

BY

GEORGE HODGES

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS

1933

BOSTON AND NEW YORK
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To

MY CHILDREN

This tells how once the King of Glory came from heaven to visit us here on earth and live amongst us; how He was born in Bethlehem and brought up in Nazareth; how He went about telling people of the Heavenly Kingdom, and doing good, ministering to the sick and the poor; how He was misunderstood, and disliked, and even hated, till at last they took Him in Jerusalem and nailed Him to a cross so that He died; and how, after that, He came to life again, and went back into heaven, promising to return.

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I

How the King was born in a Stable, and was brought up as the Son of a Carpenter, and lived Unknown for Thirty Years.

WHEN THE KING CAME

I

THE YEAR ONE

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Once upon a time there was a Year One. Strangely enough, it was not the beginning of the years. The world was already very old: nobody knows how old. People had been living on the earth, time out of mind, in mighty nations, fighting great battles and building great cities. But somehow, everything seemed to begin over again that year, because that was when the King came. And we have taken it ever since as the most important of all dates. When we say that this present year is Nineteen-hundred-and-something, we mean that the Year One was just so many years ago.

It is always to be remembered about that year that one of its days was Christmas Day.

You may not think that strange. Christmas

comes so regularly every year, like apples in autumn and snow in winter, that it seems to belong to the order of nature, and one may easily imagine that it has been celebrated always, and that it is as old as boys and girls. But the truth is that there was never any Christmas till the Year One.

Year after year, and year after year, the evergreen trees grew in the woods and nobody came to get them. Nobody thought of lighting them up with candles or of loading them down with candies. The holly showed its berries of red and the mistletoe its berries of white, and nobody paid any attention to them: except perhaps the Druids, whoever they were, and they had never heard of Christmas. The twenty-fifth day of December came and went, like the twenty-second and the twenty-ninth; and boys and girls were born and grew up into men and women with never a Christmas carol nor a Christmas tree nor a Christmas gift, and without having so much as heard of the singing angels or of the Holy Child; because that was before the King came.

Now, in the Year One, there lived in a quiet little place, in a small village hidden among hills, a young girl named Mary. I cannot tell you how old she was, but we will guess that she was at the age when girlhood passes into womanhood. Neither can I tell you how she looked, or whether her eyes were brown like the earth or blue like the sky; but we may be sure that she had a sweet face, because she was very good and gentle, and had a fair and sweet soul.

One day, Mary was sitting alone in her room. She may have been reading; for we know that she loved to read. A poem which she wrote, called the Magnificat, is full of the memories of books. Or, she may have been sewing; for she was presently to be married, and would be getting ready for the wedding. She was to marry a neighbor, the village carpenter, named Joseph. It was a spring morning, and the flowers were in blossom, and the birds were singing, and the sun was shining. Thus she sat, with her heart full of beautiful thoughts, when of a sudden such a gleam of

splendor shone about her that it seemed as if the sun had been under a thick cloud and had just come out and begun to blaze in good earnest. Mary turned to see where this new brightness came from; and there beside the door, dressed all in white, stood a resplendent angel.

The angel said, "Hail, thou that art highly favored, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women." And Mary was afraid, and began to tremble; so that the angel said, "Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favor with God." Then, while she held her breath and listened, he told his wonderful errand. God had seen the sin and sorrow that were upon the earth, He had heard little children, and even grown men and women, fathers and mothers, crying. He knew how people were trying to be good and making a sad failure of it because they were ignorant or weak. And now God was about to do what He had long promised: He was to come and live among us. God had, indeed, lived among men always, as He does to-day: always

and everywhere we are in the presence of God. But now he was to make himself known in a new way. The King of Glory was to take our human nature upon him, and become a man like us. He was to come, not in his royal robes of splendor, not in the garments of the sunset, not with his holy angels with him, but as a little child, to be born as we are, to grow as we grow, and thus by living our life to teach us how to live. And when the King came in his humility, Mary was to be his mother.

And Mary said, "Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word." Then the angel departed from her. That was the first day of the Year One.

II

THE HERALD OF THE KING

The King had long been expected. Men of God in the Old Testament had promised that the King should come. They had also promised that before he came, somebody should appear to tell the people that he was coming, and to prepare his way; for that was the custom when kings came. Sometimes the road lay over wild lands, and companies of men were sent to make it smooth. They cut down forests, and bridged rivers, and even leveled hills and filled up valleys. All this they did under the orders of the king's herald.

One of the Old Testament prophets, Isaiah, had said that when the King of Glory came, such a herald should precede him with such orders. The prophet, in his vision, heard the herald's voice in the wilderness: "Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. Every valley shall be filled and every mountain and hill shall be brought low; and the

crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways shall be made smooth; and all flesh shall see the salvation of God." Another prophet, Malachi, had said that the road to be made ready for the King was not laid down on any map, but was in the heart of man; where the valleys are valleys of ignorance, and the hills are hills of pride, and the rough and crooked ways are ways of sin. Malachi said that the King's herald would be like the prophet Elijah: "He shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord."

At last, one day, just before the beginning of the Year One, a strange thing happened to a priest in the temple. The priest was a very good old man named Zacharias. He lived with his good old wife, Elisabeth, in a quiet little place among the hills, where they were much respected and loved by all their neighbors. The old people liked the quiet of the village, but they were much troubled by the

quiet of their own home; for every day, from morning to night, no sound was there but the sound of their own gentle voices. Many times they had prayed to God to send them a little baby, but their prayers had not been answered.

Now the time came when it was the turn of Zacharias to go to Jerusalem to take his part, with other ministers, in the temple service. Services were going on every day in the year, but there were so many ministers that they had to take turns. And even when a new company came week by week, they had to draw lots to divide the service, one to do this, another to do that. This time it so happened at the drawing of lots that Zacharias was chosen to burn the incense. That was a great honor which came only once in a man's life.

So Zacharias went in to burn incense. One part of the temple was called the Holy of Holies: and nobody ever went into it except the high priest, once a year. Just outside the Holy of Holies was the Holy Place. The

doors which led into it were covered with gold, and against them hung a heavy curtain colored white and blue and scarlet and purple. Inside, there stood on the right a table and on the left a great candlestick having seven branches, and beside the candlestick was the altar of incense overlaid with gold. Two men went in with Zacharias, one carrying a golden bowl full of incense, and the other a golden bowl full of burning coals. These they put on the altar and went out, leaving Zacharias alone. Outside were all the other priests and many people in great silence praying. Zacharias was to take the incense and sprinkle it on the burning coals so as to make a thick fragrant smoke. "And the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God."

Then it was that the strange thing happened; for as this white-haired old man cast the incense on the coals and the place was filled with smoke, suddenly he saw an angel of the Lord standing beside him. And when Zacharias saw him, he was troubled and fear

fell upon him. But the angel said, "Fear not, Zacharias: for thy prayer is heard; and thy wife Elisabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John. And thou shalt have joy and gladness; and many shall rejoice at his birth. And he shall go before the Lord." That is, the child, thus to be born, should be the herald of the King.

You remember how Mary answered the angel. She said, "Be it unto me according to thy word." But she was young, and it was easy for her to believe in wonders. Zacharias, in his long experience, had learned that life is governed by great, universal laws. One of these laws is that little babies are not given to old people. And that was the first thought which came into his mind. "I am an old man," he said, "and my wife well stricken in years." Indeed, they were now such aged folk that they had given up expecting that their prayer would be heard. But the angel answered, "You do not know who I am. My name is Gabriel. I come to you straight from God. He has sent me to tell you these glad

tidings. And now because you do not believe, you shall be dumb and not able to speak until this comes to pass." So he vanished out of sight.

Meanwhile, the people in great silence waiting without were wondering why Zacharias stayed so long in the Holy Place. And when he came out, and held up his hands in blessing but was speechless, and could only make signs to them, touching his lips and pointing to the sky, they knew that he had seen a vision. So he did the duties of the day and then went home to tell the great news to his wife.

And by and by, that which the angel had promised was fulfilled. The little boy came into the quiet house of Zacharias and Elisabeth. And when he was eight days old, according to the custom, he must be named. All their neighbors and cousins were glad that God had heard their prayer, and on that day they came together to rejoice with the happy father and mother. And they said, "Of course, the baby will be named Zacharias,

after the name of his father." "Not so," said Elisabeth, "but he shall be called John." "Why," the neighbors and the cousins said, "there is none of thy kindred that is called by this name. There is not another John in the whole family." And they asked Zacharias, making signs to him, for he seems to have been deaf as well as dumb. And he took a slate and wrote a sentence on it, as they crowded about to see; and the sentence was, "His name is John." And at that moment his speech came back, and his mouth was opened immediately, and his tongue was loosed, and he spake and praised God. And all who were in the house were filled with fear and wonder, and when they came out they spoke to everybody whom they met, saying, "Have you heard what has happened in the house of Zacharias? What manner of child shall this be?" But Zacharias and Elisabeth knew what he should be. They knew that the child John should be the prophet of the Highest, the herald of the King.

III

SHEPHERDS AND SINGING ANGELS

Months passed after these angelic visits. The green of spring deepened into the green of summer, and lilies grew in the fields, and the fruits ripened and were gathered into barns, and the cold nights came on. And one night there were shepherds in a pasture close by the town of Bethlehem, watching their flocks.

We seldom see shepherds in this country. The men with sticks who drive sheep through the streets are not true shepherds. Shepherds never drive sheep: they go before and call them, and the sheep know the shepherd's voice and follow him. While the flocks are in the fields, the shepherds stay among them to keep them from straying off and getting lost, and to protect them from wolves and bears in places where such wild animals are found.

There are countries where the grass is green all the year round, and where almost the only snow which the people see is on the tops of

the mountains. In such countries the sheep can feed in the fields even in the winter.

In the old time — in the Year One — people when they went to church on great holy days carried little lambs with them. That would seem queer nowadays. Imagine a church where everybody had a lamb under his arm instead of a prayer-book! I am afraid that most small boys, and even some small girls, would find it hard to sit perfectly still in a church full of frisky little woolly lambs. But in those days they were used to it, and did not mind it. The people brought the lambs to give to God. And they brought the very best lambs, because they wished to give God the very best they had. Some of the lambs came from these Bethlehem pastures: and they who took care of the church lambs would be good shepherds, gentle and kind men.

So it was in the winter night, and the stars were shining and all was still, and in the fields the flocks were sleeping while the shepherds watched. We may guess that, as they watched,

they talked together and told one another stories; especially about David, who, when he was a boy, had lived at Bethlehem and had lain out many a frosty night in that very pasture with his sheep, and once had killed a lion and a bear. The lion and the bear had come to get the sheep, and young David had fought with them and killed them. And they sang the Shepherd's Psalm, "The Lord is my shepherd." And they spoke of the King of Glory, how he would sometime come, according to the promise; and they wondered how he would look, and what he would do when he came. And they said, "When he comes he will be seen here in Bethlehem." For that was written in the Bible.

Then, as they watched and talked and sang, suddenly something happened.

All at once a great and wonderful light began to shine, brighter and brighter, in the black sky, till the night was like the day. All the clouds came out in the splendid garments which they wear in the early morning and in the late afternoon. And out of the central

shining appeared an angel of the Lord, gleaming like a flame of fire. The shepherds fell upon their faces, not daring to look up, hardly daring to listen or to breathe, while the angel spoke. "Fear not," he said, "for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people. The King has come! To-night he is born, yonder in Bethlehem. There shall you find him, sleeping in a manger."

And then the sky grew brighter still, as if behind the clouds the gates of heaven itself were swinging open, and out there came angels upon angels, a multitude of the heavenly host, shining and singing. This is what they sang: —

"Glory to God in the highest,
And on earth peace,
Good will toward men!"

Then the chorus ceased, and the choir went back into heaven, shutting the golden gates behind them; and the night was dark and still again, and the shepherds were alone. So up they leaped, crying one to another with

ARRIVAL OF THE SHEPHERDS

great joy, "Let us go to Bethlehem and see! Let us find the King!" And off they went, down the frosty road, their eager feet making a great noise in the silent night and their breath white behind them.

Now, all that day, travelers had been journeying in unusual numbers along the ways which led to Bethlehem, for it was the time of a census. Cæsar Augustus, emperor of Rome, wished to know how many people were living in that part of the country, so that he could make them all pay taxes. Every man had to go to his own city; that is, to the place in which his family belonged. So there was a great stir all about the land, with men going to this place and to that to have their names written in the census-books. Among the others, out of Nazareth came Joseph the carpenter, because he was of the family of David, and with him Mary, his espoused wife, who was to be the mother of the King. Down they came like other poor folk, over hill and dale, till they arrived at Bethlehem. But

when they reached the town there was no place where they might stay. Every house was full of guests, and the inn was already crowded. The only shelter was a stable, — a common stable, strewn with hay, with dusty cobwebs hanging from the rafters, and occupied by cows and donkeys. There, accordingly, they went.

And there, while the angels sang and the sky blazed over the pastures of the sheep, the King came. The King of Glory came! The mighty God, the Maker of all things, the Lord most high, came to dwell among us. And behold, he was a little child. And Mary wrapped him warm in swaddling clothes, as the way is with babies, and laid him in the manger.

There the shepherds, all out of breath with running, found them, — Mary and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger. And they told what they had seen and heard about the singing angels and the King of Glory, while Mary listened, remembering the angel who had appeared to her. So the shepherds returned,

glorifying and praising God for all the wonders of that night. Thus was kept the first Christmas, with carols by the choir of heaven, and God's own Son, the Saviour of the world, coming as a Christmas gift for all mankind.

IV

THE KING'S NAME

A WEEK went by after the night when the King came, and the day arrived when he should be given a gift which he would keep all the rest of his life. You know what I mean. Many gifts are given to little new babies, some of which they play with till they are torn or broken all to pieces; a few, like spoons and cups, last a long time; but this gift lasts always, and the child carries it with him wherever he goes, even when he becomes a man; and never loses it, no matter what may happen to him. This gift is his name.

The naming of a child is therefore a matter of such importance that people may properly make a great occasion of it. In those days it was the custom to pray God to bless the child, much as we do now at baptism. The neighbors and the cousins came together, as they did at the naming of little John, the son of Zacharias and Elisabeth, and there was much rejoicing.

It was time, then, to name the King, who had been laid in the manger; though he lay no longer in the manger. They had, no doubt, found a better lodging for him. Far from home as they were, there would be some interested neighbors to come in. The shepherds would be there. And for cousins, it is quite likely that Zacharias and Elisabeth came, bringing their little boy, the King's herald, now six months old. There was no question as to the name; no need to decide between this good name and that. The angel had told Mary at the beginning what the child should be called; saying, "Thou shalt call his name Jesus."

Now, Jesus was a very common name. One would think that a name which came straight from heaven, brought by an angel, would be uncommonly beautiful; or at least quite new, such as no mortal had borne since the world began. For example, as St. Matthew suggests, the King might have been called Emmanuel, which means God with us. But the fact is that there were other children by the name of Jesus.

It was a plain, ordinary name, like John or James.

The reason why it was so common is that it had been the name of a celebrated general; as boys are sometimes called now after the heroes of the wars. This general is known to us under the name of Joshua. You remember about him: how he led the army of Israel into the Promised Land, and drove out the people who lived there, fighting brave battles and settling the country, like William the Conqueror. There were two ways of spelling his name. Sometimes they spelled it J-o-s-h-u-a, and sometimes they spelled it J-e-s-u-s. Thus it is spelled once in the second way in the eighth verse of the fourth chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews. One was the Hebrew spelling, the other was the Greek: that is the only difference.

For the King had come to be like us, and to live the same life which we live. He did not wish to take a strange name, nor even a royal name, different from us.

And Joshua was a good man to be named for; because the King had come to fight

hard battles and to lead us against strong enemies and finally to settle us in the Kingdom of Heaven. You know that when little children are baptized, and the minister says, "Name this child," and the child is given a name, then the minister says, "We receive this child into the congregation of Christ's flock; and do sign him with the sign of the cross, in token that hereafter he shall not be ashamed to confess the faith of Christ crucified, and manfully to fight under his banner against sin, the world and the devil; and to continue Christ's faithful soldier unto his life's end." Thus we are all soldiers, striving for the right.

Moreover, the name Jesus means Saviour. It stands for the whole purpose for which the King came, — to save us from our sins.

V

THE KING IS TAKEN TO THE TEMPLE

The next thing which happened in the child's life took place when he was a little more than a month old. One day, when the frost was out of the air and the winter had begun to change into the mildness of spring, his father and mother wrapped him up, and took him for a journey. It was his first sight of the world. Where do you suppose they carried him? Six miles they went, over hill and dale, from the little town to the big one, from Bethlehem to Jerusalem. They could see the city a long way off, for it stood on a mountain. And in the midst of the city, with its roof overtopping all the others, shining in the sun, was the splendid church, the holy temple. Joseph and Mary watched it from afar as they made their way along the country road, not only because it was bright and beautiful, but because it was the end of their journey. That was their errand, to take the child to church.

There was service every day in the temple; and as Joseph and Mary passed along the city streets, climbing higher towards the sacred place, they saw many other people who were going in the same direction. Some of them were carrying little babies in their arms; for it was the custom to bring every first-born child to present him to the Lord. The child was brought to church, and the minister, in the name of God, received him with prayer, and then gave him back again to his father and mother. It was a solemn and beautiful way of saying, "All of these little children belong to God, our heavenly Father; and they are to be brought up and cared for and trained and taught as the children of God." Then followed a special service for the mother. The mother brought an offering, which, if she were poor, consisted of a pair of turtle-doves or two young pigeons. The service began with the burning of incense on the golden altar, in the Holy Place, as on the day when Zacharias saw the angel. After that, before the door of the Holy Place, on a great

altar made of stone, the sacrifices were offered, while those who brought them stood close by, praying and praising God. The child's part of the service was called the Presentation; the mother's part was called the Purification.

So it was that day. The child was presented to the Lord, and the mother's offering was duly made, and the service was over. Now there was an old man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon. He was a very good and holy man, and, like many others, was wondering when the King would come. Simeon did not know that the King had come already; but he was sure that he must soon appear, for he had had a wonderful dream, and in the dream God had spoken to him, and had promised that before he died his eyes should behold the King of Glory. And since it was written in the Old Testament that the Lord should appear in the temple, Simeon was all the time expecting him at the daily services. Every day, as he climbed the temple hill, he said to himself, "The King may come to-day." Perhaps he thought that the sky would suddenly open, and there would

be a great light, brighter than the sun, and out of heaven the King of Glory would come down.

But this morning, as he came into the temple, praying in his heart that his great desire might that day be granted, he heard the voice of a little child. And when he looked, there was a baby in its mother's arms. And as he looked again, for the child was very beautiful, a strange feeling came over him. It seemed as if God were speaking in his heart again, as He had spoken in his dream, and telling him that here at last was the answer to his prayer. He stopped and took the child up in his arms and blessed God. And he said, "I have seen the King of Glory. Now let me die in peace, for mine eyes have beheld him who shall be the Saviour of the world." And while Joseph and Mary marveled at the old man's words, he gave them his blessing, and said, "Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel; and for a sign which shall be spoken against."

Then came an aged woman, a widow, whose

name was Anna. She was eighty-four years old, and all her time for many, many years had been spent in the temple. She was a prophetess; that is, her eyes were wonderfully opened to see the will of God. And she gave thanks to God when she saw the child, and spoke of him to all her friends.

So the parents went out of the temple with the child who had been thus strangely welcomed, and carried him back over the country road.

VI

THE VISIT OF THE WISE MEN

THEN the child grew and grew, as other little children grow; and for a good while nothing happened except just the ordinary things. But one day, there came to the door some very extraordinary visitors.

Nobody knows how old the child was when they came. Indeed, St. Luke, who was much interested in the beautiful stories of our Lord's childhood, knew nothing about them. So far as he had learned, Joseph and Mary went back to Nazareth after the presentation in the temple, carrying the child with them. But St. Matthew had heard about the Wise Men. One would think, to read the story in St. Matthew's Gospel, that our Lord was as much as two years old when the Wise Men came. In that case, it was at Bethlehem that he learned to walk and to talk, and began to say his prayers, and to learn by heart some of the holy words of the Bible.

Meanwhile, away in the east, nobody knows where, men were watching the sky. They lived out of doors in those countries much more than we do, and the clouds and the stars were of great interest to them. Every night they looked to see the constellations rise and set; and when a comet blazed across the heavens, they were filled with wonder. They did not know that the stars were other worlds. They thought that they were shining jewels set in the blue roof of the sky. They imagined that they formed mysterious sentences, which one might read did he but know that celestial language, and thus learn the story of the earth, both past and future. Especially, they connected the great stars with the great kings; and one of their number, a magician named Balaam, had one day, in a vision, cried, "I see a star and a king!" meaning a king of the Jews.

These men were called Wise Men. They were very well acquainted with the sky, and knew the stars by name. And one night as they gazed, according to their custom, at the

lights overhead, behold, there was a new star which none of them had seen before. There it shone, brighter than any of the others, low down in the western sky. And the men said, "There is the star, and in that direction, towards the west, is the land of the Jews. There is a king born! Let us go and see him."

So they started on their long journey. Some say that they were as great as they were wise; that they were kings; that there were three of them, — an old man named Caspar, and a middle-aged man named Melchior, and a young man named Balthaser; that they rode on camels and had a train of servants with them. Indeed, we may imagine whatever we please; for nobody knows anything about it.

On they came, then, over the hard wild ways which lead from the east to the west, till at last they reached Jerusalem; and there they stopped to ask their way. "Where is he," they said, "that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him." But the people knew of only one king of the Jews, and his name

was Herod; and he had been born so long ago that even now he was approaching the end of his bad life. That was not the king for whom they were looking. No: there was a new king, a little child. So they went about asking people in the streets, and the news spread, — the news of the appearance of these strange visitors and of the strange question which they asked. People said one to another, "Have you seen those three dark-faced pilgrims out of the far east? Have you heard what they are saying?" And men began to be afraid. They said, "Now there will be war. The two kings will fight for the crown."

Presently, King Herod heard what was happening in the city, and he too was troubled. The thought came into his heart that this new king might perhaps be the King of Glory. He knew that the people were waiting for a king, and that promises of his coming were written in the Bible. Herod was not a reader of the Bible, and he had no idea that the King of Glory was to come from heaven. All that he had in his mind was a vague know-

ledge that a great king was expected, and a clear conviction that when the king came there would be no more use for Herod; and he immediately determined that he would find the new king, if he could, and kill him in his cradle.

So he called the ministers together, and when they came he said, "Where is it that that king, of whom the Bible speaks, will be born, when he comes?" And the ministers looked into the Bible, and there it was, written down in black and white long, long before, that the King of Glory should be born in Bethlehem. "And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda; for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel."

Then Herod called the Wise Men privately, and they came to meet him in his palace, and he asked them many questions. He seemed particularly anxious to find out just how long ago it was when the star appeared. And the Wise Men, who were better acquainted with stars than they were with kings, answered

him in all simplicity. And the king said, "You are to go to Bethlehem. Go, and search diligently for the young child; and when ye have found him, bring me word again, that I may come and worship him also." That is what he said, — the bad king, who meant to kill him.

Away they went, then, out of the king's palace, and made their way towards Bethlehem. And as they went, behold, they saw the strange star, shining again in the night sky, as they had seen it in their own land. And they rejoiced with exceeding great joy. The star seemed to go before them, leading them, and at last to stand still over the little village. And under the star was a house; and in the house, the King!

The house did not look much like a palace. Joseph was a carpenter, having nothing to live on but his daily wages. He could afford only the humblest lodgings. Neither did the child look much like a king. There he stood leaning against his mother's knee, looking at the strange visitors with great eyes of won-

der, and probably more interested in the Wise Men's camels than he was in the Wise Men themselves. But the Wise Men kneeled before him and worshiped him. And when they had opened their treasures, — the queer-looking boxes and bundles which they had brought with them, — they presented unto him gifts, gold, and frankincense, and myrrh.

These gifts were of no use to the child. Frankincense and myrrh are kinds of fragrant gum which are found on trees and shrubs in the East, somewhat like the sticky substance which we find on pines. They were used to make incense. (Frankincense means simply pure incense.) That is, when put on burning coals they made a thick smoke with a sweet smell. Such was the incense which Zacharias was placing on the golden altar when he saw the angel. Thus frankincense and myrrh were used in the worship of God. Accordingly, the Wise Men's gifts were meant only to express the thoughts of their hearts. As they knelt before the child and spread them out at his feet, they said by these symbols what we say

in the Te Deum when we sing, "Thou art the King of Glory, O Christ." And since the Wise Men were not Jews but Gentiles, Joseph and Mary may well have recited one to another, after they went, the great words of the Old Testament, "The Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising. . . . They shall bring gold and incense; and they shall show forth the praises of the Lord."

That night, before the next day dawned, the Wise Men had a dream; and, in the same night, Joseph had a dream also. In the Wise Men's dream God told them about Herod, and warned them not to return to him, but to go back to their own country another way. In Joseph's dream, the angel of the Lord appeared and said, "Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word: for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him." So the Wise Men rose up, and, avoiding Jerusalem, went to their homes far in the east. And Joseph also waked and aroused

Mary, and they made a hasty preparation for a long journey, and before it was light were a good distance on the road which led from Bethlehem toward the south.

And when the day came, Herod, too, opened his eyes, and he remembered the Wise Men and their errand. "This morning," he said to himself, "I shall know about the King." But the morning passed, and the afternoon also, and no word came from the Wise Men, and at last Herod saw that he would hear nothing more from them, and he was very angry. But he knew that Bethlehem was the place where the King should be born; and he knew, according to the time which he had diligently inquired of the Wise Men, that the King could not be more than two years old; so he sent men who killed all the little children in that village, all who were under two. And there was lamentation and weeping and great mourning in Bethlehem among the poor mothers and fathers. But meanwhile the King was on his way, all safe and sound, to Egypt.

VII

THE CARPENTER'S HOUSE

THE good angel had promised Joseph that he would be sure to let him know when it was safe for him to come out of Egypt. So, one night, he appeared again in a dream and told him that Herod was dead. "Arise," he said, "and take the young child and his mother, and go into the land of Israel; for they are dead which sought the young child's life." Out of Egypt they came, then, very gladly, riding part of the way and walking part of the way, — the child walking, too, — past Bethlehem, and then past Jerusalem, and so to their own town of Nazareth.

Nazareth is an inhabited place, even to this day. And not only are there still to be found both fathers and mothers and little children in it as there were then, but they are still living in much the same way; for life changes very slowly in the East. Nazareth is among the hills, which rise about it on all sides, like a

sheltering wall. The streets run across the bases of the hills, probably on the old lines; for few things which men make last so long as a street. There is a town well, a clear spring of cold water, which is still the centre of the life of the place, as it was when our Lord was a lad there. Twice a day, all the women and girls go there with earthen pots on their heads, bringing them empty and carrying them away full; and every week they meet by the side of the stream which flows from the spring, and have a good, neighborly time doing their family washing.

So years went by, and the child Jesus grew, and there were other children. The house was full of them. There were James and Joses and Jude and Simon, our Lord's brothers; and, at least, two sisters. The house in which they lived was a white building, perhaps made of clay, having a flat roof. The roof was reached by an outside stairway. When the weather was good, the family all slept on the roof, each wrapped in a blanket, under the stars. One of the Psalms tells how the

grass grew on the roof, and how the hot sun withered it. The house had no window in it: all the light and air came from the wide door. Once Jesus told about a woman who lost a piece of money, and she took a broom and a candle to find it; for the corners were dark even in the daytime. He had seen his mother looking for things with a candle and a broom. There was not much furniture in the house. Joseph may have had his carpenter's bench on one side, but he probably did most of his work out of doors, except when it rained. There would be a big chest on the other side, for rugs and blankets. The room had a stove in it; and a tall lamp made of earthen-ware, which was kept burning day and night. There was a mill in which Mary ground grain to make flour for bread, the little girls helping her. The little boys helped their father at his bench. For dinner they had large, round, flat loaves of bread, like crackers, with butter or cheese, and milk and honey; sometimes they had eggs, sometimes fish from the Lake of Galilee; with a dessert of grapes or figs.

There was commonly a central dish of curds or porridge, in which all dipped their broken pieces of bread. Sometimes the children would gather locusts, and their mother would roast them, and grind them up with flour, and bake them into nice grasshopper cake.

The children played among themselves or with the children of the neighborhood before the doors and in the street. They had a game in which they pretended they were dancing at a wedding, and another in which they pretended they were crying at a funeral. And sometimes some of the children would be offended and say that they would not play. All this Jesus remembered, and spoke of it when he became a man.

Every little child was taught to say his prayers, and learned sentences of the Bible. The first words which Jesus, like all the others, learned by heart were these: "Hear, O Israel, the Lord thy God is one Lord. Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul and with all thy might." As he grew older, he committed to memory

eighteen other verses, and recited them at the beginning and the ending of every day, when he said his prayers. That was the custom in all good households. These verses he presently learned to read and then to write. Then his mother taught him the meaning of the words, and told him the beautiful stories of the old time which were written in the Bible, about the faith of Abraham, and the great deeds of Moses, and the courage of Joshua, and the exploits of Samson. There were other stories which would impress him still more, because he could see with his own eyes the places where they had happened. There was a high hill near Nazareth, and when one climbed it there was a wide view over all the country. To the east was Mt. Tabor, where Deborah and Barak fought in a wild storm of rain against Sisera; and Mt. Gilboa, where King Saul fell down slain in a great battle with the Philistines. To the west was Mt. Carmel, where Elijah contended with the priests of Baal, and called down fire from heaven. And the child knew that to the south, across

the plain and beyond the mountains, lay Jerusalem, the holy city.

On the sabbath, there was a service in the synagogue, to which the child went with his parents. There he heard the Bible read and explained. The children stayed after service, and had lessons of their own. Even on week-days, the school met in the church, and much of the teaching was religious. Thus our Lord was taught about the world in which he had come to live, learning arithmetic and geography and history; and about God who is in all the world and over it, and who wishes even the smallest children to tell the truth, to be good and gentle, and to obey their parents. And on holidays, he climbed the high hill to see the view, and there thought over all these things.

Sometimes, his brother James went with him, and the two boys climbed together, talking as they went; for James was a good lad, with a serious mind. But the difference between James and Jesus was like the difference between a statue and a tree; that is, James's

goodness was rather stiff and formal and made by rule, while the goodness of Jesus was free and natural. They were so unlike that James was often shocked at the sayings of Jesus. I am guessing at this from what we know about them after they grew up. James could not understand him. Indeed, he perplexed the whole family. Many times, therefore, Jesus sought the height alone, thinking his own thoughts.

VIII

AT THE AGE OF TWELVE

Every year, Joseph and Mary went on a long journey. They set out in the early spring-time, when the leaves were green and the blossoms were pink and white, and before the days grew hot. First they walked a long way to the east, till they came to the river Jordan, on whose banks they pitched their tent and spent the night. Then they turned to the south, following the course of the river all that day and the day after, and avoiding the country of the Samaritans; for the Jews and the Samaritans were enemies. The third night they slept in Jericho. The next morning, turning to the west, they began to climb the hills, along a rough road which was shut in on each side by steep walls of rock. So they came to Bethany, on the Mount of Olives, and a little farther on, at a sudden turn of the way, they beheld Jerusalem. That was their destination.

On this annual journey, Joseph and Mary

had many companions. Indeed, it would not have been safe for them to go alone, for the roads were beset by robbers. Even between Jericho and Jerusalem men sometimes fell among thieves, who plundered and beat them and ran away leaving them half dead. People who went on journeys were therefore accustomed to travel in companies or caravans. Joseph and Mary, when they started on their long walk, would have many of their friends with them. Half of the people of the place would be going on the same journey; and on the way other groups would join them, coming out of other villages and bound in the same direction.

For every year a great festival was held at Jerusalem, called the Feast of the Passover. It was kept in remembrance of the delivery of the people of Israel out of slavery in Egypt. The people were slaves to the Egyptians, and one night a plague of death fell on the houses of the masters; in every house somebody was dead. But the destroying angel passed over the houses of the slaves. That night the slaves

rose up, and escaped out of Egypt. So they became a nation. The Passover was the national birthday. The Fourteenth of Nisan, — for that was their name for the month, — was like our Fourth of July. It was accordingly the custom to keep the Fourteenth of Nisan, and all the following week, as a national holiday. But instead of keeping the festival, each in his own home and town, all the people, as many as could get away, gathered at Jerusalem. Of course, there were many who had to stay behind, to mind the babies, and tend the stores. But there were great numbers, like Joseph and Mary, who were able so to arrange their affairs as to go on the spring pilgrimage.

One can easily see that they must have had a merry time of it. Briskly they walked in the early morning along the pleasant ways, stopping to drink out of the brooks which ran among the hills, resting and sleeping at noon in the shade of the woods, talking cheerfully one with another, meeting new people, and seeing new sights. Thus they journeyed, like the Pilgrims of the Canterbury Tales. Some-

times, as they pitched their tents at night, or started in the morning, somebody with a strong voice would begin to sing, and all the others would sing with him. The Psalms from the one hundred and twentieth to the one hundred and thirty-fourth were pilgrim songs.

"I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills,
From whence cometh my help.
My help cometh even from the Lord,
Who hath made heaven and earth."

So they sang beside the mountains.

"They that put their trust in the Lord shall be even as the Mount Sion,
Which may not be removed, but standeth fast for ever.
The hills stand about Jerusalem;
Even so standeth the Lord round about his people,
From this time forth for evermore."

That was the song when the holy hills came into view. Finally, they joined in a great glad chorus as they entered the city itself: —

"I was glad when they said unto me,
We will go into the house of the Lord.
Our feet shall stand in thy gates, O Jerusalem.
Jerusalem is built
As a city that is at unity in itself.

For thither the tribes go up, even the tribes of the Lord,
To testify unto Israel,
To give thanks unto the name of the Lord."

Of course, on so long a journey it was impossible to take the little children. They must wait at home till they were old enough and strong enough to go on this wonderful pilgrimage and see the sights of the wide world. Until then they must be content to listen to the stories of their fathers and mothers about their adventures by the way and the splendors of the holy city. But now, at last, our Lord was twelve years old, and his time came. Out they started in the coolness and beauty of the spring morning, making their way down the valley by the river, and sleeping at night in tents under the full moon; for the Passover always came when the moon was full. So he stood presently on the side of the Mount of Olives and gazed on the great city.

Jerusalem was built on hills, and had a high, stout wall of stone about it, with a tower at every turn. Within the walls were crowded the white, flat-roofed houses, clinging to the

terraced hillsides. And above all shone the splendid temple. To the temple the pilgrims made their way, Joseph and Mary holding Jesus by the hand. Entering by a great arched gateway, they found themselves in the temple inclosure. This was a wide court, paved with stone, and surrounded by four high walls. Against the walls on the four sides were porches, their roofs upheld by pillars. The court was crowded with people; some of them being pilgrims like themselves, while others were engaged in carrying on a noisy trade, selling doves and lambs for sacrifices and changing money, calling out at the tops of their voices. In the midst stood the temple itself. A great stairway of fourteen steps led to an entrance which was called the Beautiful Gate. This opened into a large room, without roof, called the Court of the Women. Here Mary waited, while Joseph and Jesus climbed another stone stairway to a room called the Court of Israel. This was separated by a low barrier from a third room called the Court of the Priests. Standing beside the barrier they

could see a large stone altar, and behind it a stone building with a porch and a roof. In this building, hidden behind doors and curtains, were two rooms, one called the Holy Place, in which stood the golden altar of incense; and the other called the Holy of Holies, an empty room, through whose floor jutted up the bare rock of the top of the hill. There in the Court of Israel they offered a lamb for their sacrifice. A priest took the lamb and killed it, burned a part of it in the fire which was blazing and smoking on the stone altar, and gave the rest to Joseph. So with the lamb upon his shoulder Joseph, taking Jesus, rejoined Mary in the Court of the Women, and they all betook themselves to the place where they were to stay, and where with friends and relatives they had arranged to eat the Passover Supper. Then they all sat down together when the evening came, and the roasted lamb was on the table, and there were bitter herbs, and bread and wine. And at an appointed moment in the meal, Jesus as the youngest of the company said, "What does this service mean?"

And his father in answer told the story of the Passover. Then they all sang songs: which we have in our book of Psalms, from the one hundred and thirteenth to the one hundred and eighteenth.

"This is the day which the Lord hath made;
We will rejoice and be glad in it.
Help me now, O Lord:
O Lord, send us now prosperity.
Blessed be he that cometh in the name of the Lord."

Then there was a week of visiting, and seeing sights, and going to services in the temple; and so the festivities were over and they started to go home. A great many other people, thousands of them, were starting at the same time, and there was much confusion. But at last they got safely out of the city gate and over the Mount of Olives on the way down hill to Jericho, when they missed Jesus. They had noticed, of course, that he was not by their side, but that had not surprised them. He was twelve years of age, a sturdy, independent lad, and in the caravan there were many whom he knew, some of them his rela-

tives. So they said, "He is with his cousins or some other playmates. We shall see him when it is time for supper." But supper-time came, and even bedtime, and he did not appear. Joseph and Mary went about in the dark, with torches, asking all their neighbors where he was; but nobody knew. At last, with heavy hearts, in deep distress, they hurried back again along the road to Jerusalem, seeking him.

But Jerusalem was a very large city; and just then, as we have seen, it was in confusion, with crowds of people coming and going. Joseph and Mary went to the place where they had lodged, but he was not there. They inquired of all the people whom they knew, but could find no trace of him. One day had already been spent in going as far as Jericho; another day in returning; it was now the third day. And the King of Glory, who had been so solemnly and wonderfully intrusted to their care, was nowhere to be found.

At last, they looked in the temple. There in one of the porches was a company of people

sitting on the floor, as the custom was, and listening while wise men taught. The teachers were called doctors; not doctors of medicine, but doctors of divinity, teachers of religion. And in the midst of the gray-bearded doctors, not only hearing them but asking them questions, was the child Jesus, while all who heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers. And when his parents saw him they were both glad and amazed; glad to find him after their long search, but amazed that their son, this little lad of Nazareth, should be sitting so serenely in the midst of those learned people, understanding what they said.

But the boy had done wrong, so they thought. He had caused them great distress. And his mother said, "Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? Behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing." She reproached him, with tears in her eyes, as mothers must. But he answered, "How is it that you sought me? Did you not know that I would be found in my heavenly Father's house?" He meant that they should have known him better than

CHRIST IN THE TEMPLE

to search for him from street to street. They should have looked first in the temple.

It shows what he had been doing all that week, while other boys were gazing at the shop windows, or admiring the bright uniforms and shining lances of the castle guard. He had spent his time in the holy house, attending to the words of the wise; like the child who loves to get away by himself with a book.

It shows, too, that already he had that habit of attention which is a part of greatness. When he was interested, he thought of nothing else. By and by, we shall see him thinking so deeply that for a long while, even for days, he forgets to eat. Now he forgets what time it is, and how his father and mother are starting off for home. All his mind is on the words of the wise men. That was different from the ways of James and Joses and the others. His father and mother could not understand it.

But he turned about and took their hands and went away between them, and so came to Nazareth again and took up the old life.

Every day he did just what they wished him to do. Every day he learned his lessons, and said his prayers, and did his work, growing tall and strong; and everybody loved him.

II

How the King became Conscious of his Kingship, hearing a Voice out of the Sky; and how certain Fishermen believed in him and followed him.

I

THE HERALD SPEAKS

All this time, while the King was growing out of boyhood into manhood, the King's herald was in the wilderness.

The little John must have stayed at home till he was as much as twelve years old. His father and mother would not have allowed him to go off alone till he was at least as old as that. It may be that during these years the little King and the little herald met. For their mothers were related, and Mary visited Elisabeth before either of the children was born. Elisabeth may have visited Mary at Nazareth, bringing John with her.

John's father and mother, you remember, were very old. They may have died while the lad was in his tender years. He may have gone to the wild woods because there was nobody at home to look after him. But there was a better reason. He went into the wilderness because he was told to go by a voice

which he heard in his soul. Even as a little boy, he heard it calling him and calling him. And as he grew older, he was able to make out what it said.

The voice told him that the King was coming. But that was no secret: many people knew that, and were waiting for him to appear. The voice told him that he, the little John, was to be the herald of the King. But this, too, he knew before. His father and mother had told him many times the beautiful story of the angel at the altar, and of the message which was brought from heaven. He knew that he was to go before the King and prepare his way in the hearts of the people, preaching like Elijah. Then the voice told him to go into the wilderness. Little by little, he came to understand that he was not to be a minister like his father, nor a carpenter like his uncle, nor a fisherman like his cousin, but was to spend a great part of his life as a hermit. He was not to live in a house, nor walk about in the streets of towns, but was to be a man of the woods, living all by himself,

under the sky and the trees. Thus he was to prepare himself to be the herald of the King.

For no serious work can be done without preparation. Not even a game of ball can be well played without knowing the game and practicing it often. Not even a school examination can be passed without getting ready for it by hard study. Nobody can be a motorman without learning how, or a soldier without being drilled. Thus the boy John would first study the life of the woods. He would spend his holidays camping among the hills. He would learn how to make a hut, and how to get fire by rubbing sticks together, and how to find food and cook it, and how to see his way where there was no path. He would get acquainted with the habits of the wild bees, so as to know where they kept their honey, and how to take it without getting stung. He would get his mother to teach him how to make grasshopper cake. He would make friends with the wild animals, so that he might live safely in their neighborhood. Thus he would prepare himself to be a hermit.

But that was only the beginning. All his hermit life was meant to prepare him to be the herald of the King. In order to be the herald of a king one must know the king when he appears. And in order to know the King of Glory it was necessary to have a pure heart, and to be accustomed to the presence of God. So years went by, and John still lived in the depths of the woods. He cared little about what he had to eat or to drink, and was not at all particular about his clothes. He devoted himself wholly to God, saying his prayers in the face of the stars and of the sun, feeling and seeing God in the wonderful world about him, and trying in every way to increase in the knowledge and the love of God. And that went on till John was thirty years of age.

Then, one day, the voice which had called him into the woods told him that it was time for him to go out. "Come," said the voice, "and stand beside the river. There speak to all who pass by, saying that the King is coming, and that if they wish to see him they

must first make their hearts clean of sin, and as a sign of it they must have their bodies washed in the running water; they must be baptized. And, presently, among the company, you will find the King himself. You will see the Spirit descending upon him."

So John went out and stood beside the river Jordan. There was no bridge, but the stream was shallow and the road ran through the river. People were coming and going, wading across the ford. The wilderness came near the edge of the water, a tangle of tamarisks and willows, and there were stones along the bank, and reeds in the wet places. John was a strange figure, his long hair falling upon his shoulders and his long beard falling upon his breast, a great rough cloak of coarse yellow cloth about him, made of camel's hair, and tied about his waist with a belt of leather. Coming from his long stay in the wild woods, and standing there in his youth and strength with his long staff in his hand, his face browned by the sun and the breeze, and a look in his eyes as of one who had seen God,

he was a strange and striking person, and everybody stopped to see and hear him. Day by day, the crowd increased about him.

There were country people going in to market, and city people going out to see their farms. There were soldiers in the uniform of the Roman army, and publicans who collected the Roman taxes: men whom most people hated, for the Romans had conquered the land and held it by force of arms. There were those who came from curiosity, having been told that a wild man was saying wild things at the ford of the Jordan. There were those who came hoping to find a man of God, and finding him indeed; and among them several young fishermen from the Lake of Galilee, of whom we shall hear much again. There were those who were living lives of sin, daily breaking the Ten Commandments. There were messengers from the great people, from the governor and the chief priests, from the leaders of the temple and of the synagogue, Sadducees and Pharisees, to ask John who he was, and to carry back word to their masters.

Indeed, outside the crowd, but within hearing, were some of the great people themselves, who had come to see with their own eyes and to hear with their own ears. To all these the herald spoke, in a loud voice, telling them that One whom they knew not stood among them, even the King of Glory; and baptizing all who repented of their sins.

II

HEAVEN AND THE RIVER

All this time Jesus had been living at Nazareth. It is likely that during these unrecorded years Joseph died, for we hear no more about him. In that case, Jesus, as the eldest son, became the head of the family. Probably he worked at the carpenter's bench, with plane and saw and hammer, and built houses and mended roofs; and the neighbors sent for him to make their doors and tables, and yokes for their oxen. The family grew up about him, from boys and girls to men and women. At least two of the brothers, James and Jude, married: St. Paul tells us that. And there were small nephews and nieces. When our Lord took little children in his arms he knew how to hold them. There was always a baby in the carpenter's house.

The life of the great world went on outside, with its business and its battles, with ships putting out to sea, and soldiers marching, and streets of cities full of eager people.

From the hills of Nazareth one looked down on the great roads which ran across the plain: from Egypt, traveled by merchants; from Jerusalem, with pilgrims coming and going; from Damascus, with caravans. To the north of the village lay the highway from the sea, along which Roman legions made their way, with sound of trumpets, the sun glittering on the points of their spears, and all the Nazareth boys perched on high rocks and in the trees to see them. Nazareth was a station on these lines of travel, like a town where railroads meet, and was kept acquainted with the world's news and knew the world's ways. It had a bad name among the villages of the neighborhood; so that our Lord, growing up there, did not live a sheltered life, in which it is more easy to be good than to be bad, but was exposed to continual temptation. He knew all the trials which boys have to meet in public schools and in the streets of cities. He was tempted in all ways just as we are: with this difference, that he never sinned. All his life long, he never did a wrong deed, nor said an

evil word, nor even had in his heart a sinful thought. Thus the years went by.

Then, one day, the word came that a new preacher — perhaps a new prophet — was preaching at the ford of the Jordan. Somebody who passed by said so; or perhaps some Nazareth neighbor going to Jerusalem, to the temple or the market there, had gone to hear him, coming back with great accounts of the speaker and the sermon. People talked about it in the street after supper. And our Lord determined to go down and hear the preacher with his own ears.

Probably he went on foot, in a company of the neighbors; but it is likely that he walked alone, at a little distance from the others, thinking his own thoughts — for he had much to think about. Eighteen years had now passed since he sat as a boy in the temple and listened to the teaching of the doctors. During these years he had gradually come to see that he was different from other men. As he grew tall and strong, his mind and his soul grew and became great. He felt his strength of

spirit as a strong man feels his strength of body. More and more, as he talked with James and Joses and the others as they worked together, he came to see that his thoughts were not as their thoughts. As he stood alone on the heights of the hills, and looked out across the world and up into the sky, he felt that God was wonderfully near to him, so that he could almost touch him with his hand. He heard, like John, a voice in his soul, calling him away from the carpenter shop, away from Nazareth, to be a leader and a helper of men. As yet, however, all was dim and vague. He increased in stature and in wisdom, but he had not yet come to a full knowledge of himself.

So he arrived at the ford of the Jordan, and there was John the Baptist, in his great cloak, preaching, the crowd pressing close about him.

Sometimes the people asked John questions. The men who came from the rulers asked him, saying, "Who are you? are you Elijah?" "No," he said. "Are you the King of Glory?" "No." "Who are you, then, that we may

have an answer to take back to our masters? What do you call yourself?" He said, "I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, 'Make straight the way of the Lord.'" "Why, then," they said, "do you baptize, if you are neither Elijah nor the King of Glory?" "I baptize," he answered, "with water only, teaching people to prepare their hearts for the coming of the King. The King will come. Yes, he has come already. Here among you in the crowd he stands, even now, unknown." And John stretched out his great arms right and left, as if he were inviting the King to come forth and declare himself. And Jesus stood in silence, listening.

The soldiers were much impressed when John spoke of the life which a true man ought to live, and they said, "What shall we do?" And the publicans said, "What shall we do?" And he told them to be just and honest and contented, and to do good to others.

Sometimes, John the Baptist spoke very sternly, seeing the wickedness of the world, and crying out against it. He especially re-

proved those who seemed to be better than they really were, telling them that God would judge every man according to his works, and that already it was as when a woodsman marks with his axe where he will strike the tree. And he looked straight at a company of gentlemen on the edge of the crowd, so that everybody knew whom he meant, and the gentlemen turned away in confusion and anger, saying one to another that the speaker was but a crazy man.

Meanwhile, between the answers and the speeches, people were coming up in little groups to be baptized, wading out and plunging with a great splash into the river, or standing while John poured water on their heads. And among them Jesus came that he might be baptized. It is not likely that John the Baptist knew him, having spent so many years in the woods; but the moment he saw him he perceived that he was some great person. There was a light in his eyes which made him unlike anybody else. Indeed, when John looked again, he was almost sure that here at

last was the King of Glory. And he said, "I must not baptize you. It is for you to baptize me." But our Lord insisted, and into the water they went, the two together, the herald and the King, with the river beneath and heaven above. And John baptized him.

This ceremony did not mean what baptism means now. Baptism, as we have it, is the service by which persons are admitted to membership in the Christian society, the church. Our Lord's baptism was like what we call ordination. It was the act by which he entered into the ministry.

There he stood, then, between heaven and the river; and a wonderful thing happened. The divine voice, which had spoken so often in the soul of John and in the soul of Jesus, seemed now to them both to be speaking straight from the sky. They two felt that they were surrounded by a blaze of glory, the heaven being open and shining down upon them. The herald saw a form, dim and shadowy, as of a fluttering dove coming down and resting on the King. It was the sign

which had been promised him long before in the wilderness, by which he should recognize his Lord and Master. And the voice said, "Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

III

THE THREE TEMPTATIONS

The voice from heaven changed the whole manner of our Lord's life. He worked no more at the carpenter's trade after that. He had a much more important business; for he knew now, with all certainty, that he was indeed the Son of God.

Nobody knows all that that means. Even wise persons who have studied it deeply are not able to make us understand it in its fullness. But some things in it are quite plain.

It is plain that Jesus was the Messiah. Messiah is a Hebrew name, as Christ is a Greek name; and they both mean one who has been anointed. It was by anointing, — that is, by pouring fragrant oil on one's head, — that a man was made a priest or a king. This was a way of saying that God had called this man into his high service, and that he would give him blessing and strength from heaven. The people, for a long, long while,

had been looking for a wonderful Anointed One, who should be their king and their priest at the same time, — a king to make them great and a priest to make them good. Mysterious things were said about him in the Bible. They were all expecting him; but in a temple or a palace, not in a carpenter's shop. That day by the river, when the Spirit as a dove came down from heaven, God anointed Jesus.

Jesus was the Messiah; but the name Son of God meant more than that. One day, he said that anybody who had seen him had seen God, because he was in God and God in him. God is in all the world, where the heavens declare his glory, and all things show his wisdom and his might: God is the Father. God is also in all men, speaking to us in our hearts by the voice of conscience: God is the Holy Ghost. But in neither of these ways does God speak very clearly to us. Nature does not make us sure of his love, and conscience does not make us sure of his will. But God is in Jesus Christ, the Son of God. By him, God speaks and tells us plainly of his love and of his will. In him

God so dwells that Jesus Christ is at the same time man and God.

This was the great meaning of the word from heaven. At that moment Jesus came to complete knowledge of himself. It was as if a prince, brought up in the house of a carpenter, had at last discovered the secret of his birth, and learned his place in the world, crying, "I am the son of the king!" So Jesus, with the light of heaven in his eyes and the voice of heaven in his ears, said over and over to himself, trying to realize it, "I am the Son of God! I am the Son of God!"

Immediately, he went away alone, seeking a place where he might think. He plunged into the wilderness out of which John had come. There he stayed, days and days, out of the sight of men, in the silence of the woods, with the wild beasts for neighbors, thinking and thinking, making out what all this meant for him and for the world, planning his new life. Long after, he described what took place there, putting it in the form of a story. Thus one time when the apostles had been preaching so

that people turned from their sins, he said, "I saw Satan fall from heaven like a flash of lightning," meaning that he foresaw the day when evil would be wholly cast down by the good. So here he said, telling what happened in his soul, "The devil came and spoke to me;" meaning that one wrong thought after another came and attacked him.

He said that one day he was very hungry; for he had been so occupied with his great thoughts that he had forgotten even to eat. You remember how he was so interested that day in the temple that he forgot to go home. So days and days passed there in the wilderness, during which he sat still, with his eyes upon the ground, thinking and thinking. At last he was aroused by the appearance of a visitor, and when he looked to see who came, behold, it was the devil. The devil began in a very friendly way, as he always does, and said, "It is now a long time since you have eaten anything. You must be very hungry. And here you are in the wild woods, a long way from good food. If you are the Son of God,

speak to these flat stones and turn them into bread. The Son of God can do that. Moreover, you are going out presently into the world to tell men about God; you are not going to be a carpenter any more. How will you support yourself? How will you get bread to eat? Make your own bread. Use your divine powers to help yourself." That is, the devil suggested that he ought to look out for his own interests, for his own comfort and advantage. Here he was giving up his business in order to devote himself entirely to the service of God. Was that a wise thing to do? For there are people who think of nothing but their own pleasure. They are like the old woman in Mother Goose, who "lived upon nothing but victuals and drink." Our Lord turned his back upon that kind of life. "It is written," he said, "'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word which proceedeth out of the mouth of God.'" That was the first temptation.

Then the devil did what a regiment of soldiers sometimes do in battle. The soldiers pretend to run away, so as to get the enemy to

chase them, and thus they get the enemy into an ambush where there are guns firing upon them from all sides. The devil pretended to agree with what our Lord said. "Of course," he answered, "the body is not of so much importance as the soul. It is best to do the will of God, even if we go hungry. We ought to think only of God. Come, let us do as you say." And the devil took him away off to the holy city, and placed him upon the top of one of the high towers of the temple, and they looked down, and the men and women seemed like ants crawling over the pavement far below. "Now," said the devil, "let us rely upon the word of God. God says that he will give his angels charge over those who love him, and in their hands they shall bear them up lest they stumble over the stones. Cast thyself down." There it was, sure enough, in the Bible, looking like an invitation to do all sorts of wild and reckless things, trusting in the care of God. There have been people who have met the first temptation and overcome it, and have devoted themselves to God's service, and then

have been tempted to neglect or to abuse their bodies, feeling that somehow God would be pleased to have them fast or whip themselves or break the laws of nature. But our Lord answered, "It is written again, 'Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.'" That is, we are not to run needless risks to see if God will save us. We are, indeed, to be on guard against paying too much attention to our bodies, but we are also to be careful to pay them such attention as they need. So our Lord determined that though he must give up his trade and be in peril of hunger in the service of God, he would still live a natural life, taking all proper care of himself. Thus he met the second temptation.

These two, you see, were like the rocks on either side of a narrow river. Some have struck the rock on one side and have lived lives of mere worldly comfort; some have struck the rock on the other side and have become fanatics, doing foolish things like crazy people. Our Lord went straight between. But now this course brought him to a mountain. For

the devil was not yet discouraged. The devil is very patient. "I know what you want," he said; "you want the whole world to be good and happy. Let us go up on this high mountain, where we can see the world." So up they went, in the vision, and there the world lay, spread at their feet like a great map. It was the sight which he had seen so many times from the great hill near Nazareth; and he looked now with the same deep longing in his heart, to help men and to save them. There lay the little towns, in every one of which sin and sorrow lived, because the devil had them in his power. And the devil said, "Now I will go away and leave the world in peace. I will go out and all joy shall come in, if you will do one thing. Here in this solitary place, where no man can see us, kneel down before me!" It was as if the devil had said, "You cannot govern the world without me. You cannot even begin your great plans without my help. If you determine always to be perfectly good, always to do perfectly right, always to follow the ideal wherever it leads

you, you will fail. That is the truth about it. You will get yourself killed." To which our Lord answered, "Get thee behind me, Satan; for it is written, 'Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.'"

Then the devil left him, and behold, angels came and ministered unto him.

IV

THE TWELVE FRIENDS

So the King came out of the wilderness, with his face shining like a star. But he still wore his carpenter's clothes; and that kept most people from knowing who he was, for with most people clothes mean a great deal. Out of the wilderness he came into the valley of the river, and there was John the Baptist preaching. And the King walked slowly by along the road, and John looking over the heads of the crowd saw him. And he spoke to two men who stood beside him. "There he is," he said. "There is the King of Glory." And immediately the two men followed the King.

One of these men was named Andrew; the other was named John. We will call him John the Apostle, to distinguish him from John the Baptist; though after this we shall not hear much about John the Baptist, — except once. Andrew and the new John were fishermen from the Lake of Galilee. They lived

in Capernaum or in Bethsaida: the towns were close together. They were partners in the fishing business. Each of them had a brother. Andrew's brother was named Peter, and John's brother was named James. They were all partners together, these four friends.

Each of the pairs of brothers had a good mother. The mother of Andrew and Peter was named Mary, and the mother of John and James was named Salome. The mothers were neighbors and good friends, like the sons. Both of them became friends of the King, and went about with him and with their sons, and cared for them. But Salome had been a friend of the King from his boyhood, for she was his aunt. Our Lord's mother was her sister. Thus James and John were our Lord's cousins. It is likely that Jesus had known all four of these young fishermen for many years, Capernaum being but a little way from Nazareth. Probably they were all about the same age, — about thirty; though Peter was older than John, for, as we shall see by and by, he could not run so fast.

Andrew and John were the first to join themselves to the King, hearing what John the Baptist said. They followed Jesus, and he heard their footsteps as they came hurrying after him, and turned about and said, "Whom are you looking for?" They answered, with deep reverence, bowing down, "Master, where are you staying?" And he said, "Come and see." So they went on together, the King and the two fishermen, and spent that afternoon talking till the sun went down, asking questions and answering them.

The next day, Andrew found Peter and brought him to Jesus; and John found James. Then our Lord himself found Philip, who was already a friend of the four partners, and, like them, a fisherman. Philip had a friend named Bartholomew, also called Nathaniel, who lived in Cana, not far from Nazareth and not far from Capernaum. Philip told Bartholomew that they had found the Messiah, that his name was Jesus, and that he came from Nazareth. Bartholomew could not believe it. He knew Nazareth as we know any little homely

town in our neighborhood. It seemed impossible that any good thing could come out of Nazareth. But Philip said, "Come and see." And Bartholomew came and saw and believed.

Thus already six friends had gathered about the King. Nobody knows what Bartholomew's trade was: he may have been a fisherman like the other five. That was the chief business of that neighborhood. There were many fish in the Lake of Galilee, and when they were caught and salted they were sent all over the empire, and people ate them at fine dinners, even in Rome. The fishermen did not get rich, but they were by no means poor. James and John and their father Zebedee had men working for them. It was a healthy and happy occupation for those who had strong arms and an independent spirit and patience and courage. They lived out of doors, with the wind blowing in their brown faces. They were accustomed to danger, for the lake was subject to sudden storms. In such a life, these six — if we may count the friend from Cana — had passed their days since they were boys; and

CHRIST AND THE FISHERMEN

all that time had been good friends, not only fishing together, but talking together, — talking about the sermons at the synagogue, and the true life, and the world in which they lived, and God above them and beside them. They were just the men whom the King wanted, manly and open-minded.

By and by, — though this was after some months, — the King invited six others. One was named James, and was called "the little;" either to distinguish him from our Lord's cousin, or because he was a short man. Another was Thomas, a very matter-of-fact person, with a mind of his own, and rather inclined to look on the dark side. Two were named Judas, one of them being also called Iscariot. That means a man from Kerioth, a town of Judea, a long way from Capernaum. Judas Iscariot was a stranger to the others; but they came to know him only too well. Another friend was Simon, who belonged to a wild secret society called Zealots, who were all the time laying plots against the Romans. Another friend was Matthew.

In the lists of the twelve friends, or, as they are called, the twelve apostles, the name of Judas Iscariot always comes last. But I have here put Matthew at the end, partly because it is likely that he was the last to be called, and partly because there is a story connected with his call. A great road ran through Capernaum. Sometimes it was called the Way of the Sea, and sometimes the Great West Road. It connected the lands of the east with the lands of the west, extending from beyond Damascus to the coast of the Mediterranean. Caravans, like trains of cars, were all the time going back and forth over it. The Romans had paved it, and kept it in good order, and for this service they collected toll. There was a toll-gate at Capernaum, and one of the men who sat at the gate was Matthew. Many people disliked Matthew very much, because he worked for the Romans, and they hated the Romans. They disliked him all the more because he was a Jew. It seemed to them a shameful thing that one of their own people should be in the employ of the foreign con-

querors. So Matthew was one of the most unpopular persons in town. Few respectable persons would have anything to do with him. He had money and a large house, but his only associates were those who were in his own business. He had even been turned out of the church.

It is much to Matthew's credit that in spite of all this he was a good man. The six fishermen, who saw Matthew at the toll-gate every day, knew that; and they knew also that the King did not care anything for popularity. Wherever the King found a good man, he loved him. It must have been pretty hard for Simon to love Matthew, whom all his secret-society friends hated so. But the toll-gate was near the place where Jesus was accustomed day by day to speak to the people. And Matthew sat there, hearing every word he said. Every sentence went into Matthew's heart and stayed there. And one day, after the sermon, the King passed by the gate along the Way of the Sea, and as he went he held up his hand to Matthew and said,

"Follow me." And Matthew stood straight up, and went out and followed him. That night he gave a great dinner at his house, and had all his friends there, a strange company, and the King sat at the table. For Matthew felt just as Andrew and John and Philip did; having come himself to know Christ, he wanted his friends to know him.

Thus there were twelve friends of the King, according to the twelve tribes of Israel. And they were called Apostles, which means Men who are Sent; because our Lord was teaching them so that he might send them to teach others.

V

THE KING GOES TO A WEDDING

Our Lord had no intention of returning to the carpenter's bench, but he wanted to go home. He wanted to see his mother, and his brothers and sisters. He had now been away a long time, and they would be anxious about him; they would be wondering what had become of him. And he wanted to tell them. So he started in that direction, probably taking Peter and Andrew, and James and John, and Philip and Bartholomew with him. The way led through Cana, where Bartholomew lived. And when they came to Cana, our Lord found his mother there and other Nazareth folks, who had come to a wedding. The village was full of people with happy faces, and there was music and dancing. In that country everybody lives out of doors, and the pleasure of one family is shared by all the others.

Our Lord was acquainted with the bride and groom. His family and theirs were such old

friends, — perhaps relatives, — that his mother was quite at home there, and went in and out of the kitchen, where they were preparing the wedding supper. So the King was invited to the feast, and all his new friends with him. You see how pleasantly and naturally Jesus Christ began his new life; not as a hermit like John the Baptist, and not even as a priest in the temple or as a preacher in the synagogue, but just like other people, taking part in the simple joys of his neighbors. Even now, coming to them as the Son of God, he did not make himself different from them, but sat down in the old way at the table; and not a boy or a girl stopped laughing because he was there. They had a better time than ever.

But in the middle of the feast, our Lord's mother came behind him and whispered to him. "They have no wine!" she said. She had been in the pantry, and had found the family in much distress. Here were all the people, and not wine enough! It was probably a little wedding, and the seven unexpected guests had made a difference. Let us remem-

ber that in that country everybody drank wine. It was almost as common as water. Life was much more simple than it is at present; and, the people living out of doors as they did, wine did not do them so much harm as it does here. The drinking of wine was one of the joys of social life. And now the wine was giving out; the skin bottles looked like big toy balloons out of which the gas has escaped; and the party would be spoiled. So the mother of Jesus came and told him, not knowing what he would do, but hoping that he might do something. It shows how she was accustomed to depend upon him when things went wrong at home. It was he who always made them right. "Yes," he answered. "I see. I will attend to it presently." And she went back and told the servants, "Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it."

Now there stood there, out of sight of the wedding guests, six stone jars for water, — large jars, like those in which, in the Arabian Nights, the forty thieves were hidden. For while the Jews used little water at dinner,

they used a good deal before dinner. They poured it on their hands to make them clean before they ate, and were very particular about it. Having so many guests, the family had borrowed water-jars from their neighbors, and so much water had been taken out of them that they were almost empty. There they stood against the wall, a line of empty jars, when our Lord, rising from the table, went out and found them. "Fill them with water," he said to the servants. And they filled them up to the brim. "Now," he said, "draw out and carry to the master of the feast." So in they dipped their buckets and drew them out all dripping. But do you know what it was which filled the jars, and dripped from the buckets, and gleamed in the glasses on the table? It was wine, red wine! And the master of the feast tasted of it, and he said, "This is the best wine that ever I drank." And he lifted a shining glass in honor of the bride and groom, saying, "Most people bring in the choicest wine at the beginning, but you have kept it until now."

This is what is called a miracle. The King of Glory did many miracles, of which this was the first.

There was a time when people thought that God was very far away. They knew that God had made this world, but they thought that after he had made it he had gone back again into heaven, where he had stayed, for the most part, ever since. But sometimes things happened here on earth which were so wonderful that they said, "God must have come back and done that:" and these wonderful things they called miracles.

The truth is, as we know now, that God has never gone away at all. He is here always and everywhere. Everything that happens in the world of nature, even though it happens every morning, like the rising of the sun, is done by God. What wise men call "laws of nature" are only God's usual ways of dealing with us. So when we come upon some new and marvelous thing, like talking without wires across hundreds of miles, or turning water into wine, or making sick people well by speaking to

them or praying for them, we do not ask, as men once asked, "Did God come down and do this, or is it only the work of man?" We ask, "Does this belong to the usual or to the unusual ways of God?" That is, is this the sort of thing which happens only once, by which God suddenly makes his presence known, or is it done in accordance with such a "law" or custom of God that many people might learn to do it if they were only good enough or wise enough for God to teach them? Our Lord said, "The things that I do shall ye do also, and greater things than these shall ye do." And that has come true, — at least, the first part of it has come true, — with regard to curing the sick.

There are some of our Lord's wonderful works, however, which we cannot explain by any knowledge which is known to us. When we come to such miracles, as we do just here at the wedding in Cana, the thing for us to say is that all our largest knowledge is very, very small. One of the wisest men who ever lived said that with all his wisdom he was like a

child picking up pebbles on the shore of a vast ocean. Even now we know but little about the world we live in, or about God who lives in the world and in our souls.

Jesus turned the water into wine. That is all we know about it. The Son of God could do it, and he did it; to add to the happiness of the guests at a village wedding.

III

How the King was driven out of the Town where he had lived, and went about the Land of Galilee, with his Disciples, doing Good and teaching the People.

I

THE KING AMONG HIS NEIGHBORS

And now, at last, after these great weeks, the King was back again in his own home. There was the little town in the hollow of the hills with the green heights about it. The dusty streets ran between the white houses, and there among them was the carpenter's cottage, and beside it, in the shade of the trees, the carpenter's bench. The shavings lay beneath it as he had left them on the day when he started on his journey. His mother and his brothers and sisters stood at the door; and as the sun set and the stars came out, and the cool winds blew down from the peaks above, they talked together in the twilight, and he told them what he had done while he was away.

But not all. There are some things which cannot be said unless the listeners are in perfect sympathy; and even then there are thoughts too deep and hopes too high for speech. It is not likely that our Lord told them that he was

the King of Glory, the Son of God. It is not likely that he told them that he was the Messiah, though they may have guessed that that was what he thought. He said that he would never be a carpenter again, that he had decided to give up his trade and to go about the country preaching; and he must have said that he had been led to this decision by the call of God. Of this we may be as sure as if we had sat there in a dark corner hearing what he spoke. And they did not like it; that, too, is plain. James did not like it; he felt that it was irregular and improper. He wished to have all things go quietly on in the usual way. The brothers and sisters agreed with him. They all had good arguments against it. The mother probably said little, dimly remembering the message of the angel; but she did not like it, either. They were all against it. They urged him not to do it, but to live like other people. They were satisfied with things as they were, but he was not satisfied.

Then came the sabbath day, and everybody went to church. The church, which they called

the synagogue, stood in the midst of the houses like a New England meeting-house in a country town, except that it had no steeple. It was a plain, square building, entered by three doors. Within were two rows of pillars, and at the end of the room was a platform, on which sat the most important people, in the chief seats. In the midst of the platform was a pulpit, and behind the pulpit a curtain, and behind the curtain a chest, and in the chest a Bible. But there was no New Testament in the Bible; that had not yet been written. And the Old Testament was in pen-and-ink, on various rolls of parchment. Overhead, before the curtain, hung a lighted lamp. So in came the congregation: old men and women who had known our Lord from the days of his early childhood, and remembered him before he could walk; and young men and women who had been to school with him, with whom he had played and worked; and boys and girls. And our Lord, still wearing his carpenter's coat, sat in his usual place beside his family.

The service began with a long prayer, which everybody knew by heart; then they read out of the Bible, different men coming up from the congregation, each reading a few verses, and, if he chose, making some brief comment upon them. The ruler of the synagogue indicated the men who were to read. Last of all, he beckoned to Jesus.

Word had already gone about the village that the carpenter felt that he was called to be a prophet. Nowadays, when we speak of a prophet we mean one who foretells what will happen in the future, but in the Bible the name is used for a preacher, for a man who speaks in the name of God. The Bible prophets said many different things in the name of God, but one message they all had in common: they declared that the world about them must be changed. Men, they said, were doing wrong, and must stop it and do right. Accordingly, quiet people, and all who liked the old ways, and men who were in authority, and all who were responsible for the evils of the time, dreaded and hated the prophets. It was

not pleasant news that a prophet had appeared in Nazareth. Jeremiah, in the Old Testament, was brought up in a little town called Anathoth, which was inhabited entirely by ministers. It was a place of the priests. Everybody in the street was a minister, or a minister's wife or sister, or a minister's son or daughter. Such a place should have been distinguished for its goodness and gentleness. But when they heard that Jeremiah was setting up to be a prophet, they tried to kill him. The ministers threw stones at him. This helps us to understand what happened at Nazareth. One time in Boston, just before the Civil War, a mob of perfectly respectable people — merchants, bankers, and lawyers — tried to kill William Lloyd Garrison, because he was a disturber of the peace of society. Every prophet disturbs the peace of society. That is what he is for.

So they looked at Jesus as he sat among them, not quite knowing what to think, remembering all his beautiful life but afraid of what he might do next; and when he stood up

to read the Bible in the service they listened so intently that they held their breath. So in the stillness he found the place, in the book of Isaiah, and read these words: *The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord.* This he read, and gave back the book, and sat down; for in those days the preacher sat when he preached. And he said, "This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears;" meaning, "This is true to-day of me. The Lord has sent me to do all this."

At the sound of his voice and in the hearing of these gracious words, they were filled with awe and wonder. But some said, "These are bold sayings for a carpenter. Joseph's son is taking much upon himself." And they remembered how he had been one of them all his life long, and some were his cousins, and some had held the ladder while he mended the wall,

and some lived next door to his married sisters and did not like them very well, and some had hired him by the day to do their work. They began to talk together as he spoke, and to interrupt him with questions. Some said in the words of an old proverb, "Physician, heal thyself;" that is, "You speak of doing great things for the nation, but here you are a poor man whom nobody has ever heard of. Make something of yourself, enrich yourself, get yourself accepted by those who are in authority; then come and say these great words and we will listen to you." It was like the first temptation.

To some he said, "It is because you know me so familiarly that you reject me: a prophet is without honor in his own country." And when they cried, "Show us a miracle and we will give you honor," he spoke of famous prophets of the old time, how they had done wonderful works of blessing, not for their own people, but for strangers. Elijah had fed a woman of Sidon during a famine, and Elisha had cleansed the leprosy of Naaman the Syrian.

STATE NORMAL SCHOOL,

Finally, they rose up in great anger, and rushed upon him where he sat, laying hold on him with rough hands, and pushing and pulling him got him out of the church into the street. The service was stopped, and the holy sabbath was profaned with their noise and shouting. And one cried, "To the cliff!" proposing that they should cast him down headlong over a steep place. But he looked upon them so that they loosed their hold. There was a light in his face like the sun at noon. They took their hands off in fear, and let him go; and he turned about and walked back through the crowd who stood in sudden silence watching him. Down he went along the street, past the church, past his own house, past the town well, and out of sight.

He never lived in Nazareth again. Indeed, after that, he had no settled home. Once he said, "Foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head." The worst of it was that his own family turned against him. His brothers did not believe in him. After a

while they thought that he was out of his mind, saying one to another, "He is beside himself." One time they all went out, his mother and his brothers, to take him as he was preaching to a crowd of people and bring him home, and somebody said, "There are your brothers and your mother," and he answered, "Who is my mother? and who are my brethren?" And he looked round on them which sat about him, and said, "Behold my mother and my brethren! For whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother, and my sister, and mother."

II

A DAY OF THE KING'S LIFE

After that, our Lord was very busy with his great work of helping people. At first in Capernaum, and then in other places in Galilee, he went about preaching and blessing. Some of these words of wisdom and works of wonder are written down in the four records of his life which are called the Gospels. Once we have an account of almost a whole day. We know what he did in the morning and in the afternoon and in the evening.

The place was Capernaum, on the Lake of Galilee, where several of the apostles lived, and where our Lord spent so much of his ministry that it was called his own city. It was then a busy town, though to-day nobody knows just where it stood, so completely has it fallen into ruins. A week had now passed since the sabbath at Nazareth, and the holy day had come again, and again our Lord with his disciples went to the service. Here, as at Nazareth,

people had been talking together about him, telling what had happened at the wedding feast and in the synagogue. And one day that week he had used Peter's fishing-boat for a pulpit, sitting in it a little way from the land, while the congregation stood upon the shore. And after the sermon he had gone out on the lake with Peter and Andrew, and James and John, while they fished; and they caught so many fish that their net brake, and even the boats were filled so full that they began to sink. After that, the fishermen fished no more for a long time, but went about everywhere with Jesus. People knew that, and talked about it.

So when our Lord entered, everybody in church turned around to see him. "The prophet has come," they whispered. "There he is in the midst of his disciples." And, naturally enough, when the time came for reading the Bible in the service, Jesus was called upon to read and preach: and so he did, and they were all astonished at his teaching. Did you ever hear anybody speak in a

very loud and unnatural voice, as if he were speaking a piece, and then somebody else speak quietly and naturally as if he were talking just to you? That is like the difference between the sermons which were usually preached in the synagogue, and the sermons which our Lord preached.

Now there was in the synagogue that morning a man with an unclean spirit; or, as we would say, a lunatic. The mind is still a deep mystery to us, even after all the wisdom of the wisest men. A diseased mind still perplexes the doctors. In that day, they said of some such persons that they had a devil; meaning that an evil spirit dwelt within them and spoke with their lips, and threw them into fits, and tormented them. Nowadays, the doctors speak of a subliminal self and a dual personality, meaning practically the same thing. Only now, people who have evil spirits are not allowed to go to church, but are shut up in hospitals. This poor man had an unclean spirit; that is, in addition to the man's own natural self, there was another self —

another spirit — which would take possession of him.

There he sat, then, in the synagogue among his neighbors, a miserable being, and our Lord spoke, and the man listened. And suddenly the other self cried out, "Let us alone; let us alone. What have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? Art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God!" And Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Hold thy peace, and come out of him." And the man fell upon the floor, and when he came to his senses again, his other self, the evil spirit, had gone out of him. That was an interesting thing to happen in church during the sermon!

Some of the people did not like it at all, feeling that he ought not to have done it on the sabbath. They were very careful about the way in which they kept the sabbath, and had made a great many rules about it, so that the day which God made for people to rest in, and to rejoice and be glad in, had become like a day in jail. Our Lord paid no attention to

these rules, but lived as naturally and freely on that day as on any other. He said that the sabbath was made for man, not man for the sabbath, and that they kept the holy day in the holiest way who made it a beautiful and happy day for themselves and for their neighbors. And the people did not like it. They said nothing that sabbath in Capernaum, but they thought much. Afterwards, it was one of the chief matters of complaint against him. But many of the congregation were greatly pleased and astonished, partly by the sermon and partly by the miracle. "What thing is this?" they cried; "what new teaching is this? He speaks even to the unclean spirits and they obey him."

So they stood talking on the steps of the meeting-house, watching him as he walked with his disciples down the street, the man who had been cured walking with them. He was to dine that day at Peter's house. But there was sickness in the family. Peter was married, and his wife's mother made her home with them, and she had a fever. Peter's wife

had stayed at home from church to take care of her. And now she met them at the door with a troubled face. And Peter said, "How is your mother?" And she said, "Much worse." And our Lord said, "What is it? What is the matter?" And they told him. And he went in where the sick woman lay, and took her by the hand, and lifted her up. And she was strong and well again, and rose and ministered to them. She went into the kitchen and helped to get the dinner.

That afternoon, the news went from house to house through all the town, and that night, after the sun was set and the air was cool, and the sabbath day was over, they brought to him all the sick folk of the neighborhood, some on beds and some on crutches, crowding all the street before the house. And the Lord came out and stood in the front door, and laid his hands on many of them and healed them.

Thus the busy day was ended amidst the thanks of grateful people, but there were many others like it. Day by day Jesus went about doing good. His heart was full of com-

passion, and he was very sorry when he saw anybody in trouble. He was not the only person who was curing the sick by a word and a touch, and casting out devils. Many ministers were doing that, and many people have done the same since, even to this day. It has always been wonderful, this effect of a strong mind on a weak body. Even now the men of science do not understand it. It is one among many strange facts which nobody is able to explain. What we do understand is that our Lord was filled with the spirit of pity and mercy. The Son of God, who by his life and words taught us about God, was full of kindness and affection for the sons of men. That is the meaning of the miracles, and it is more important than any miracle.

The next morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed. There Peter and the others found him, and said, "All men seek for thee." And he answered, "Let us go into the next towns, that I may preach there also, for therefore came I forth."

III

THE BROKEN ROOF

So the King went to the next towns, and then to others farther off: but rarely very far. Most of this part of his ministry was spent so near the Lake of Galilee that from every hill he could look back and see the shining of the blue water. His new friends, the fishermen, went with him, making a pleasant company as they walked and talked along the green ways, and sat at noon in the cool of the great trees. And the King stood in the market-places of the little towns and spoke to the people who were gathered there, telling them always that the kingdom of heaven was at hand, and that if they wished to see it they must put away their sins, and that whoever saw it would find it beautiful and satisfying beyond all imagination; and this was called the gospel; that is, the good news, — for that is what the word means. So he went about telling the good news. And in all the places he

found sick people, on whom he laid his hands that he might make them well. This he preferred to do quietly and privately, for he did not like excitement, or crowds, or to have people staring at him. Sometimes he asked the sick not to tell who healed them; but they were usually so very happy and thankful that they could not keep it to themselves. And the result was that our Lord could not stay any longer in the towns, but walked in the country among the farms.

One day, however, he came back to Capernaum, and went into a house, probably Peter's house. And people heard that he was there, and again the street before the house was crowded, though this time the crowd was mostly made up of well people. Some who had come that other day on crutches were now walking as briskly as if they had gone on two feet all their lives. And Jesus preached to them. He preached the gospel to the poor, and deliverance to those held captive by falsehood or by sin, and the acceptable year of the Lord. There they stood listening.

Now there was a young man in Capernaum who was paralyzed so that he could not walk. It may be that he could not even talk, for in the midst of all the wonders of that day he seems to have said nothing. We may guess that he was a young man, for we shall presently hear our Lord calling him "Son;" and our Lord was only thirty years of age. He was a young man, then, looking forward to a long life of uselessness and pain. Moreover, lying as he did day after day, much of the time alone, he had opportunity to think, and there were thoughts in his heart which had not come to him when he was strong and active, busy with work and play. He learned, as he lay there, that he was sick in his soul as well as in his body. He began to realize his sins. He began to see that, while it is bad enough to have a lame body, it is much worse to have a pale, thin, weak, and lame soul. And when he prayed God to make him well, he asked to be free not only from his palsy but from his sins.

The young man had four friends. And when they heard that our Lord was come

again to town, they met together. "The Prophet is here," they said one to another, "he is in Peter's house. You know what happened that morning in the synagogue, and that evening in the street in front of Peter's house; how he healed the sick. Let us take our friend to him that he may lay his hand on him and heal him." So they came in with this great plan, and there on his bed lay the sick man. It was a very simple bed, only a quilt or a blanket spread upon the floor; and they took each man a corner and carried him out into the street. But as they came near to Peter's house, they saw the crowd. It was a great crowd, filling all the street, and it was plain that they could not get through it. There was the Master in the house, but they could not reach him. What should they do? The wide door was open, and the Master sat within, but a hundred people stood between. How could they come into his presence?

The house, like the other houses, was but a single story high, and the roof was flat. There was an outside stairway leading up; for

the roof was a cool place in hot days; the lake winds swept across it. People sat on the roof in that country, as we sit on the porch. So the men climbed up. Up they went with much difficulty, the two who were ahead bending down, and the two who were behind holding their arms up, to keep the palsied man from falling out. And when they got upon the roof, what did they do but begin to break a hole in it. They kicked with their heels and pulled with their hands, and the people below heard a great noise going on above, and pretty soon splinters began to fall upon their heads, and there, as they looked up, was a man's strong hand, and his arm and shoulder, and by and by his face, and at last there were the faces of four men looking down through a large opening. And the four took the blanket and let the sick man down through the broken roof, right at the Master's feet.

Our Lord looked at them and then at him. He was glad to see how sure they were that he would help them. And the young man's face was like an open book, and his eyes

prayed, though his lips were still. His eyes said, "Lord, help me. Help me to get rid of my sins and of my sickness." But his sins troubled him most. And our Lord answered the longing of the sick man's heart. "Son," he said, "thy sins be forgiven thee." For that was a part of the gospel which he preached, — that our Father in heaven forgives the sins of all those who are truly sorry and wish to be better. So he said, speaking very kindly and affectionately, "Son, thy sins be forgiven thee." For he knew that the soul is the most important part of a man, and that to have a sick soul is the worst of all possible ills; and he ministered to the sick soul before he did anything about the sick body.

But in the house were certain scribes sitting. A scribe is a man who writes, as a prophet is a man who speaks: that is what the names mean. And there is a wider difference than that. The words which the prophets spoke were new words, which they had heard from God; but the words which the scribes wrote were old words, copied out of old books,

LETTING DOWN THE SICK MAN

mostly out of old law books. The prophet was a man of the present and of the future, but the scribe was a man of the past. The scribes were very conservative persons; that is, they liked to have everything go on in the old way, by rule. Already, they had begun to distrust and dislike our Lord because he spoke, not as one who is reciting a dull lesson, but as one who is telling what he thinks himself. And when the scribes heard him say, "Thy sins be forgiven thee," they were shocked greatly. They began to whisper among themselves, saying, "Who is this that speaks thus in the place of God? Who can forgive sins but God only?" And Jesus read their minds as he had read the eyes of the sick man. And he said unto them, "Why reason ye these things in your hearts? Which is easier to say, 'Thy sins be forgiven thee,' or to say, 'Rise up and walk?' But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins," — turning to the sick man: "I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy bed, and go thy way into thine house." And immedi-

ately the man arose and took up his blanket, and went forth before them all; the crowd parting to let him through, all being amazed and saying, "We have seen strange things to-day."

Long after, our Lord said to his disciples that they were to do just as he had done; when they saw a sinner who was sorry for his sins, they were to assure him of the forgiveness of God. And the sins, he said, which you shall thus forgive shall be forgiven in heaven. But the scribes looked in their old books, and though they found something about the priests in the temple forgiving sins, they found nothing which seemed to them to justify our Lord's great words. And the deed of mercy which he did served only to embitter them against him.

IV

THE POOL OF THE ANGEL

I SAID that our Lord, at the beginning of his ministry, stayed most of the time near the Lake of Galilee. But the great days came as the year went round, — the great days of the church, — when all who could get away from home made a journey to the temple. So our Lord went also to pray in the great church which they called the house of God. And one day there was a feast of the Jews, and all the roads to Jerusalem were filled with pilgrims on their way to church, and Jesus and his disciples went up with them.

The temple stood on a rocky hill, looking out over all the country round. At the foot of the hill there was a spring, and a little stream of cold water running out of it. They had a sheep market by the side of the stream, for the sheep were thirsty after being driven in over dusty roads out of the country. There was always a flock of them with their noses

in the water drinking, and there were men buying and selling. But besides the shepherds and the men who were buying sheep, there were always other people who were there, not for that business, but for medicine. Amongst the shepherds, and the butchers, and the priests who were getting lambs for the sacrifices at the temple, were sick folks in great numbers, some of them blind, some of them lame, who had come to bathe in the spring.

The water bubbled up out of the ground in a great pool. And beside the pool was a porch with five arches. And the sick people lay on blankets in the porch waiting for the moving of the water. For this was a strange pool. Sometimes the water lay so still that the sick folks could use it for a looking-glass and could see their thin and anxious faces in it — all but the blind ones. But presently there would be a great commotion in the water, as if somebody were blowing it with the breath of a giant, or were stirring it with a huge stick. And some people thought that this was caused by an angel going down into

the clear pool. And as soon as this happened, all the sick people scrambled down as best they could into the water, and the sickest were helped down by their friends. The idea was that whoever got in first would be made whole of whatsoever disease he had. It must have been a strange sight, that crowd of miserable people limping and crawling and rolling down into the pool.

Now one day our Lord came by, and he was very sorry, for his heart was always full of compassion for those who were in trouble. It made him sad, too, to see them struggling so one against another, each trying to be the first and to get the blessing for himself. So he stopped and looked. And there among the crowd he saw one man who had been sick longer than the others. He had had an infirmity thirty and eight years; he had hardly had a well day since he was a boy. There he lay close by the pool, waiting for the angel, but waiting always in vain; for when the spring began to stir somebody else always got in before him. When Jesus saw him lie there,

and knew that he had been now a long time in that condition, he said to him, "Do you wish to get well?" To get well! That was what the man desired with all his heart, though he had almost ceased to hope. So he answered, "Sir, I am a poor man and I have no friends. When the water is beginning to stir, I have no man to put me into the pool; but while I am coming, another steps down before me." Then our Lord said, "Arise, take up thy bed and walk."

And immediately the man started to get up. That shows that he had great faith in our Lord. He had never seen him before; probably he had never even heard of him; but he saw him now and heard his voice, and he believed in him with all his heart. Some men would have said, "Why, I can't do that. You don't know how sick I am. I have been lame all my life, almost forty years. I can't get up." But this man tried. When Jesus told him to get up, he tried to do it. And when he tried, God gave him strength. So he took up his bed and walked.

But it happened that that day was the sabbath. You remember that the people had made

themselves a great many rules about it. The commandments said that nobody should work on that day, meaning that there should be a good holiday every week, and that all people, especially those who worked very hard, should have a rest. But the ministers had been so anxious that the day should be a rest day that they had tried to keep the people from doing anything at all. They had spoiled the beautiful day. One of their rules was that it was wrong to carry anything during the sabbath. So when they saw this man, with his glad face, leaping up and down as he walked, first on one leg and then on the other to make sure that they were both sound and strong, and carrying his bed rolled up in a bundle under his arm, they stopped him. They said, "It is the sabbath day; it is not lawful for thee to carry thy bed." He answered them, "I have been a sick man, lying on my bed for eight and thirty years, and to-day I have been cured at the pool of the angel. He that made me whole, the same said unto me, 'Take up thy bed and walk.'" Then they asked him in an

angry voice, "What man is that which said unto thee, 'Take up thy bed and walk?'" They did not think at all what a good and wonderful and blessed thing it was that this poor neighbor of theirs had been made well. All that they thought of was that one of their little rules had been broken. They were angry with the man for being healed, and with our Lord for having healed him.

All this seems very strange to us, though there are still people who care more for their own way than they do for the bodies or even for the souls of their fellow-men. Such persons made many a complaint during our Lord's ministry, for he went straight on doing good deeds, no matter what day of the week it was. One sabbath day he was in a synagogue, and a man was there who had a withered hand, and they watched him whether he would heal him on the sabbath day, that they might accuse him. And he called the man to come and stand up where all could see him. So there he stood, the poor man with his useless arm. "Now," he said, "say what is in your hearts. Is it

lawful to do good on the sabbath days?" And they said never a word. And he looked around upon them all with deep indignation, being grieved because their hearts were so hard that they thought of their rules rather than of the need of the man. And he said to the man, "Stretch forth thine hand." And he stretched it out; and his hand was restored whole as the other.

But the man who came from the pool of the angel did not know who our Lord was; so when they said, "Who told you to carry your bed on the sabbath day?" he could not answer; for our Lord had gone away through the crowd. Afterwards Jesus found the man in the temple, and said unto him, "Behold, thou art made whole: sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee;" meaning that sin is worse than sickness, and that disease of the soul is a worse thing than disease of the body. But the Jews not only hated our Lord for what he had done, but from that day forth they sought to kill him, because he had done these things on the sabbath day.

V

THE KING STOPS A FUNERAL

You remember that Nazareth was in the midst of the hills, and that on the south lay a wide plain. From the Nazareth heights, across the plain, one could see the white houses of a village called Nain, built on a hillside. In this village there lived a poor widow with her only son. One day this son, his mother's consolation and hope and support, fell sick and died. It was very sad, and everybody in the village was full of sympathy for the mother, so that when the day came for the funeral there was a great company of people to join their tears with hers.

The word Nain means "pleasant;" and pleasant it was, indeed, amidst the trees, looking out north and east and west toward the high mountains, and even having a glimpse, when the sun was shining, of the blue sea. But the poor mother did not look at the view, nor did she know whether the sky above her

head was black or white. Everything was dark before her eyes.

A rough, steep path led up the hill to the village. And down this path came the funeral procession: first mourning women making a loud lamentation, then young men carrying the body on a wide flat board, then the mother, and after her the people of the town. But as they started to go down, another and very different company started to go up. There was quite a crowd of these people, some from Capernaum, some from the country round about, fishermen and farmers in rough clothes, and among them one who was dressed as they were, but to whom they all gave reverence. And as they went he talked, while they all listened eagerly. And there they met, on the side of the hill, in the middle of the rocky path, — the procession of mourners and he who came, as he said, to bind up the broken-hearted. So our Lord saw the poor mother, and was very sorry. And immediately he said what we all say when we see any one crying. He said, "Don't cry;" only, when we say

that, our friends go on crying just the same, and we cannot do anything except show our sympathy. When our Lord said, "Don't cry," he knew how to change tears into smiles. For he put out his hand and touched the bier; he touched the board on which the dead man lay. And they who bare him stood still. And the mother stopped in her sad journey, and looked up to see what it all meant, and the people of the two companies crowded around. And our Lord said, "Young man, I say unto thee, Arise." And he that was dead sat up and began to speak. What did he say? Did he finish some sentence which death had suddenly interrupted? Or did he greet his mother as one who comes back from a strange journey? Or was his first word a thanksgiving to the one who had thus enabled him to go on caring for his mother? It is all unknown to us. It is all a mystery; both the words which he spoke, and the power which made him able to speak.

But this we know: that our Lord cared. Sometimes death comes in such a way that it

JESUS RAISING THE WIDOW OF NAIN'S SON

seems as if God does not care; when the young and strong, who are so much loved and so much needed, are taken away. Then we may remember that day at Nain. God does not stop the funeral, but he cares. He is sorry for those who mourn. For he who came up the hill at Nain was in God, and God in him; and when we know him, we know God, as he said. And this, too, we know: that every morning God raises us from the death of sleep to the light of a new day; every morning he gives us back our life.

What did the young man of Nain do with his new life? Our Lord told him what to do with it, for he delivered him to his mother. It was like that day on the cross when he said, "Son, behold thy mother." He meant that the young man was to be a good son, obedient and loving, better than he had ever been before.

So the procession turned straight about, and all the mourning women stopped their crying and wiped their eyes; and the sky overhead was blue, with the sun shining in

the midst of it; and the people glorified God, some saying, "A great prophet is risen up among us," others, "God hath visited his people;" and the mother and her son walked side by side, and Jesus was with them.

VI

THE STILLING OF A STORM

Another time, our Lord had been teaching all day long, and as the sun began to go down he was very tired, but the people would not go away. They begged him to continue speaking; and he knew that if he walked away they would all follow him. But the place where he was teaching was by the side of the lake. Probably he sat in a boat anchored near the shore, as he often did. His favorite pulpit was a boat. There was one way to get apart from the crowd, and that was to row out into the lake. Our Lord beckoned therefore to Peter or John and told him to take up the anchor and row out; though even then the people ran down and got all the boats which were fastened there, and rowed out after him. But they were all so interested in our Lord's great words, and so intent on keeping as near him as they could, that not one of them looked at the sky. So when the storm came, it took them unawares.

The water is a bad place for a storm. Up comes the fierce wind and blows and blows, and the sky is black with hanging clouds. Up come the threatening waves, each with its white cap, blustering about. And the boat rolls and tosses, and turns this way and that. And sometimes the water gets into it and down it goes; and sometimes the wind tips the boat over, and throws the people into the water so that they never come up again. But all this is very dreadful indeed when the danger appears suddenly, because nobody is ready for it. The waves are peaceful and pleasant, and the boat is going quietly along, when all at once the wind comes leaping down from some opening in the hills along the shore, as if it had taken a quick run to get a start and then had jumped right over into the middle of the water. And before the people have time to think twice, the wind is shaking them as a giant might shake a body. This is the way in which storms often behave on the Lake of Galilee. And thus did the storm conduct itself that evening when our Lord

and some of his disciples had launched out into the deep.

I said that he had been teaching all the day and was very tired. Boys and girls do not understand that teaching is hard work. They do not realize that their teachers get tired. It seems to them that the only persons in the school who have a hard time are those who have to study and recite. Teaching is not so bad when everybody is interested and responsive. Sometimes children are asked, "What do you pay for coming to this school?" And the right answer is, "We pay — attention!" Teaching is easy when all the scholars pay attention. All the people to whom our Lord spoke paid attention; there was no trouble about that. The things that he said were so interesting, and he said them in such an interesting way, that everybody was interested. But his hearers did not all like what he said, as we shall see by and by. They did not even like what he did, as we have seen already. So in every company of listeners, there were enemies; and as the months went by, the number of them increased.

Our Lord saw their objecting faces, and heard them whisper one to another, and it was very hard.

So that day, after hours of this hard work, the first thing that he did as the boat began to move through the water, and the crowd was left behind, was to go into the stern of the boat and lie down with his head on a cushion. There he fell asleep; and no sooner was he fast asleep than the storm came. Black clouds hastened from their hiding-places behind the hills, white waves pushed and pulled and clutched at the boat, and pretty soon there was so much water in the bottom of it that some of the men had to stop rowing and begin to bail. Still the wind blew harder and harder, and the waves roared louder and louder, and rose higher and higher, and the boat rocked faster and faster, and farther and farther. And at last the disciples were very much afraid. They had been on that lake every day since they were little boys, and had weathered many a storm: but it seemed as if they had never seen a tempest like this. The water poured in faster

than they could bail it out. It began to look as if the boat, and all who were in it, must go to the bottom.

Meanwhile, our Lord was still asleep. The howling of the wind had not awakened him, nor the pitching of the boat, nor even the cold water splashing over him. It shows how tired he was.

Finally, the disciples called to him with loud voices; "Master, Master," they cried, "we perish." And some said, "Master, we perish; save us." Who ever heard anything like that? A crew of fishermen, who knew all about a boat and all about a storm, turned for assistance to a carpenter! Of what use is a carpenter in an open boat on a high sea? You remember that Jesus was brought up in a hill town, where the only water was in the bottom of the village well. It is not likely that he had had any experience in boats. And the fishermen knew that. This is what makes it so remarkable that they should have called for help from him. It shows that they had already come to see that he was the wisest and

the strongest and the best man they had ever known. They felt that only God could save them; and that Jesus was very near to God. So they cried, waking him out of his deep sleep, "Master, Master, we sink! save us!" And he arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, "Peace, be still." And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm. And he said unto them, "Why are ye so fearful? How is it that ye have no faith?" Then they were almost as much afraid of him as they had been of the sea, saying one to another as the waves went down, "What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?"

Afterwards, when they told this story, there was another which they liked to tell with it; about how one time some of the disciples were rowing by themselves one evening on the lake, having left our Lord on the shore; and suddenly the wind began to blow and the waves began to rise, and they rowed and rowed and got no nearer to the shore; and then they saw a dim light out across the water,

and it seemed to move and to draw near to them, and there in the middle of the lake was a man walking on the water; and they were filled with great fear, and cried, "It is a ghost!" but the man spoke in a voice which they knew, saying, "It is I, be not afraid;" and there was our Lord walking across the wet waves as if he were walking through the grass of a meadow. So he got into the boat, and the wind ceased to blow. That is what they said; and some added that Peter, seeing our Lord coming over the lake, said, "Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water;" and he told him to come. So Peter began to walk on the water; but the wind was boisterous, blowing hard against him, and the water was rough, and Peter was afraid, and as he began to fear he began to sink, so that he cried, "Lord, save me;" and immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand and caught him, and said unto him, "O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?"

These wonderful stories have never been explained: but thus much is plain, — that if

we have Jesus in our company no storm shall ever bring us to shipwreck. The winds of disaster blow, and the waves of misfortune rise, and Jesus seems far distant, asleep or on the shore. Even when he comes to our assistance across the troubled water, the sight seems too good to be true, and we cannot believe our eyes, thinking that we see only a vision. But it is he himself, who has promised to be with us and to help us, everywhere and always, till all storms are stilled and all our boats are safe on shore.

VII

THE WILD MAN OF GERGESA

Now on the other side of the Lake of Galilee, where the boat landed after the stilling of the storm, the people were all heathen. They were Greeks, probably descendants from soldiers of Alexander, who had settled there after the wars were over. The great power of the world at that time, however, was not Greece but Rome; so there were Roman soldiers quartered in the Greek cities across the lake, who protected the people but oppressed them at the same time. The shore was in many places steep and rocky, with the valleys of rivers running back into the country; and on the shore, as Jesus and his disciples drew near in the boat, they saw a sight which they could not have seen anywhere on their own side of the lake: they saw a great herd of swine feeding. You know that the Jews never ate pork, nor do they eat it to this day. So they kept no pigs. But the

Greeks kept pigs, and there they were feeding at the top of the cliffs.

Moreover, as the disciples looked, they saw something else which they disliked to see, and that was a graveyard. For the Jews were very particular as to what they touched. They had a great desire to be always pleasing to God, and they thought that there were some things in the world which God objected to, and that whoever even touched such things must wash himself, saying many prayers, and so make himself clean, before God would receive him again. Pigs were considered unclean, and pagan people were unclean, and whatever was dead was unclean, according to their rules. When our Lord put out his hand and touched the widow's son at Nain, many who stood by thought it very strange. They said nothing about it in the great joy of the moment, but they spoke of it afterwards and did not like it. So here were three unclean things at the same time: it was a pagan land, and pigs were feeding in it, beside a graveyard.

The truth is that our Lord paid no attention

to these rules. One time he spoke very plainly and said that it is not that which enters a man's lips by which he is defiled, but that which comes out: that is, it does not matter so much what we eat as what we say. To speak an evil word is worse than to break all the rules about unclean things. And for this the people who were in authority hated him. They hated him because he disregarded their distinctions between the clean and the unclean, as they did because he cared so little for their rules about the sabbath.

But now, coming down from the rocks to the shore, was something worse than a pig or a pagan or a graveyard: down came a wild man.

The wild man had his dwelling among the tombs, living in the holes in the rocks in which lay the bones of the dead. At night, when it was dark and still, those who passed by could hear him crying and screaming in a dreadful voice. And in the daytime anybody who came near enough — though most people kept as far away as possible — could see him running about

and wringing his hands, and cutting himself with sharp stones so that he was covered with blood. The man had a home and friends, and several times his friends had come and caught him, and tried to keep him from hurting himself any more. They had tied him up with ropes and even with chains; but every time he had broken loose, like Samson, and had got away. There he was, his hair blowing about his face, jumping up and down, waving his arms, crying out dreadful things, and making his way as fast as he could along the rocks to the place where our Lord's boat was coming in.

It seemed a bad place to land. No doubt, had the disciples been by themselves, they would have turned the boat away. Even as it was, they must have trembled, and they probably stood a little behind our Lord. But the wild man, when he came where they were, did not try to hurt them. He fell down on his knees on the wet sand at our Lord's feet, crying with a loud voice, "What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God most high?" For the wild man had an evil spirit. He was a crazy person.

And our Lord, as the man came, commanded the evil spirit to come out of him. It was the man's other self, his evil self, who spoke. He cried, "Do not torment me." And Jesus said, "What is your name?" And the man said, "Legion." A legion was a great regiment of Roman soldiers, and men used the word when they meant a great number, and when they thought of power and cruelty. So the man said that his name was Legion, meaning that many evil spirits had their abode in him.

"Do not torment us," cried the spirits, "let us go into the swine." And suddenly, as he spoke, there was a great commotion among the swine. The crazy man rushed towards them, and the drove of pigs, grunting and scrambling, hurried away in a fierce panic, on and on towards the edge of the steep cliff, and over into the deep water. And the men who were in charge of them, who with all their sticks and cries had not been able to prevent their mad plunge into the sea, ran as fast as they could go into the near town, and there declared that a thousand devils had gone out

of the crazy man into the herd of swine. So the owner came to see what had happened, and there were the pigs drowned in the sea, and the man sitting quiet and at peace at the feet of Jesus, clothed and in his right mind. And when the disciples told them what was done, they were both afraid and angry; for they were more concerned about their pigs than they were about the man. There was the poor man, their neighbor, delivered from his dreadful state; but their pigs were gone. And do you know what they did? They asked our Lord to go away. They told him that they did not want him in their country. The sun had set, and it was now growing dark; but the darkest place in that neighborhood was not in the midst of the thick trees, nor even in the caves of the graveyard where the man had lived among the dead; it was in the hearts of the owners of the swine.

People do not often keep droves of pigs, nowadays, in our part of the country, but they keep other things. They keep stores, and mills, and houses, and lands, and money.

Whenever they think more about getting these things and keeping them than about the bodies and souls of their fellow-men, then they are like the people of Gergesa, who cared so much for their pigs that they sent our Lord away.

After that, the man who had been cured, asked Jesus that he might join the company of his disciples. But Jesus told him that the best thing that he could do was to go back to his own home, to his wife and children, and his neighbors, and tell them what great things God had done for him. So our Lord and the others got into the boat and rowed away over the dark lake, and the man went into the city and stopped all whom he met and told them of the power and love of Jesus.

VIII

THE MINISTER'S LITTLE DAUGHTER

THERE were two kinds of churches in that country: the temple in Jerusalem and the synagogues in other places. There was only one temple, and it was great and beautiful, as we have seen, like a cathedral, with carved stone and brass. There the Feast of the Passover, and the Feast of Pentecost, and the Feast of Tabernacles — like Easter and Whitsunday and Christmas — were celebrated, and the sacrifices were offered. The men who conducted these services were called priests. There were a great many synagogues; at least, one in every town and village of the Jews' own country, and in every place about the world where Jews were living. They looked, as I have said, like New England meeting-houses, and the services which were held in them consisted of Bible-reading and preaching. The men who conducted them were called ministers and rulers of the synagogue.

Thus there was much the same difference then that there is now between priests and ministers.

One of the ministers of the Capernaum synagogue was named Jairus. He had one only daughter, a little girl of twelve, and she was very sick, so that day by day she grew worse rather than better, until at last the doctor had to tell her father and mother that he could do no more. She lay a-dying. But that very morning our Lord came back from his hasty visit to the land across the lake, and found all the people waiting for him. For Jairus remembered that wonderful sabbath in the synagogue when Jesus had cast out the unclean spirit, and he felt, and his friends felt, that our Lord might help him in his deep distress. So out of the waiting crowd came the minister as our Lord approached, and fell down at his feet and begged him to come into his house. "My little daughter," he said, "lies at the point of death, but come and lay thy hand upon her and she shall live;" and immediately our Lord raised him up and followed him.

But there was a great crowd in the street. Some were there from curiosity, that they might see him; some because they had heard him speak and wished to hear him speak again, desiring to know more about God and the kingdom of God; some because they were in trouble and hoped that he might help them. And in the crowd that day there was one woman who was in two kinds of trouble at the same time; she was both sick and poor. She had spent all her money, and she had spent it all upon the doctors, trying to get well, in vain. The worst use of money is to spend it for things which make the spender and his friends sick; but the next to the worst use is to spend it in seeking for health without finding it. This poor woman had gone to one physician after another. Every doctor in Capernaum had knocked at her door; and not one had done her any good. There she was, able to walk out a little way in the street, but still hopelessly sick. And that day as she walked she heard the footsteps and voices of a crowd coming behind her, and looking about

JAIRUS' DAUGHTER

she saw our Lord in the midst of them. And immediately she said to herself, "If I may but touch his garment, I shall be whole." But she was very timid. She did not dare to go to him before all those people, and tell him how she needed his blessing. She just waited till the throng overtook her, and mingled with the others, and made her way, nearer and nearer to him, and at last got where she could put out her hand and touch his cloak. And at once she was made whole.

But the King stopped. He looked about upon the crowd and said, "Who touched me? who pulled my coat?" And one drew back and said, "Not I;" and another said, "Not I." And Peter said, "Master, the multitude throng thee, and press thee, and sayest thou 'Who touched me?'" But our Lord repeated the question. "Somebody," he said, "hath touched me, for I perceive that strength has gone out to somebody here from me." Then when the woman saw that she could not be hid, she came trembling, and fell down on her knees before him in the dusty road, and told

him what had happened. And he put his hand upon her head. "Daughter," he said, "be of good comfort: thy faith hath made thee whole."

Meanwhile, the minister stood by, anxious and impatient, thinking of his little daughter. And as the woman went away and our Lord turned to go with him to his house, there came a messenger with great sadness, saying, "It is all over, do not trouble the Master further; the little daughter is dead." But when Jesus heard it, he said, "Fear not; only believe, and she shall be made whole." So they went on together. And as they came near the minister's house, they heard the sound of crying, and saw that there were many people in the street. It looked as if the whole parish had come to show their sympathy. In that country, when people cry, they cry with their lips as well as with their eyes, and when anybody is dead they hire mourners who can cry very loud indeed to come and help them make their lamentation. And there they were, weeping and screaming, making a dreadful noise.

The first thing which our Lord did was to turn all of these people out of the minister's house. "Give place," he said, "for the maid is not dead; she is asleep." Then he went in, taking with him only Peter and James and John and the father and mother of the child. So they stood at last in the silent room, where the little girl, all still and white, lay upon the bed, and our Lord took her by the hand. "Talitha cumi," he said, for that was the language which they spoke then; meaning, "Get up, little daughter." And the child opened her eyes and rose up. And our Lord led her to her mother saying, "She is hungry; give her something to eat."

IX

THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT

So people came from all directions to see the King and to hear his words. Some came because they hoped that he would do a work of wonder; and these were moved either by curiosity, that they might stand by with eyes wide open while some sick person was made well, or by their own distress, being themselves sick or in trouble. Some came because they were poor and hungry or disliked by their neighbors, and so the world seemed to them a bad world, and they wanted to know what Jesus would do to make it better. Very few of the great people came, the rulers or the rich; and very few of the ministers. The congregation which gathered about our Lord looked quite unlike the congregation which met in the synagogue on the sabbath day. The King of Glory came unto his own, and his own received him not; that is, the people who read their Bibles, and said their prayers,

and went to church, and were thought to be very good, disliked him greatly. Both the priests and the ministers — or, as we would say to-day, both the Catholics and the Protestants — criticised him, and objected to what he said and did, and hated him.

He did not often preach long sermons; indeed, for the most part, he did not preach at all, but just talked in his natural voice. He liked best to speak to a few people, in a quiet, friendly way, walking in the country, or sitting under a tree or in a boat. But twice he spoke at length to a considerable company, so that we have a report of what he said. Once he was on a mountain, where he preached the Sermon of the Beatitudes. The other time he was on the lake, where he preached the Sermon of the Parables. That is, in the first sermon he was telling people how to be happy, for that is what "beatitude" means; and in the second sermon he taught the people by means of stories, for a parable is a story.

Nobody knows where our Lord preached the Sermon on the Mount. But it does not

greatly matter, for all the hills about the Lake of Galilee look much alike, and are all very different from Mt. Sinai. You remember the Sermon on the Mount which Moses preached: how he stood on Sinai, a great, bleak, rocky height, in the midst of a desert; and how he brought down the Ten Commandments, cut on slabs of stone; and how there was an awful storm, the lightning flashing and the thunder booming. But the Eight Beatitudes were spoken on a gentle hill, green to the top with trees and shrubs and grass, and overlooking the pleasant lake. We may safely guess that the sun was bright, and that birds were singing in the air and flowers were shining on the ground. Indeed, our Lord in his sermon spoke of the birds and the flowers, how the Father in heaven cares for them every day. There on the grass sat the congregation at our Lord's feet,— the poor, the sad, the sinful, and the outcast; and he spoke sitting at the foot of a green tree.

So he began with the Eight Beatitudes: the eight ways to be happy. *Blessed are the poor*

in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled. Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God. Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God. Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. That is, the true source of happiness is in our own hearts: not in the houses in which we live, nor in the clothes which we wear, nor in the money which we have, but in ourselves. If we try always to do right, so that God shall approve of us, then we shall be happy, no matter what things happen to us. There may be a great difference between happiness and wealth, but happiness and goodness always dwell together. And he showed how the Ten Commandments are to be kept with our hearts as well as with our

hands; so that the commandment "Thou shalt do no murder," really forbids us even to think hatefully about our neighbor.

Then he taught the Lord's Prayer; which we say in English words which are nearly a hundred years older than the English Bibles which we commonly read. When the Bible was translated in the time of King James, everybody knew the Lord's Prayer by heart in the old form, and most people kept on saying it that way. Here our Lord showed us that if we wish to do the things that are right, and thus to be happy, we must every day ask God to help and bless us. For prayer is as necessary to the life of the soul as food is to the life of the body.

Then he gave the Golden Rule: *Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them.* Afterwards, he put this in another and still stronger way in the New Commandment. "A new commandment I give unto you, *That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.*" And he said that we ought even to love those who

hate us, trying to do them good in return for the evil which they do to us. "Everybody," he said, "loves his friends; but my true disciples will love their enemies."

At the end of the sermon, he compared the congregation to the Two Houses. "Once," he said, "there was a wise man who built his house upon a rock. Down he dug into the earth until he found the solid rock, and there he set the corners of his house. And then a storm came. The rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house, and it fell not, for it was founded upon a rock." That, he said, was like the people who heard his teaching and listened to it with attention and then did what he said. "And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it."

X

THE SERMON OF THE SEVEN STORIES

This sermon was preached, not on a mountain, but on the lake, where our Lord sat in a boat and the people stood on the bank. The sermon was all in stories, seven of them, one after another; though some of them were very short. These stories are called parables, which means that they were told, not for the sake of telling a story, but in order to teach the truth: for sometimes there is more valuable truth in a story than there is in a long chapter full of facts.

All these stories were about the kingdom of heaven. The people were looking and praying for the coming of the kingdom of heaven, but they were thinking more about the kingdom than they were about heaven. They were expecting a king with a crown upon his head, and a sceptre in his hand, and a royal robe over his shoulders, sitting on a throne. What they wanted was that such a king should

conquer their enemies, and make them again a free and rich nation. They wanted wealth and power. So, when the King came with no palace and no throne, going about quietly like other men, and dressed like a carpenter, they did not know him. In these stories, the King tried to show his people what was the true idea of the kingdom. The kingdom, he said, is not like the kingdoms of this world; it is not on the map, but in the heart. Its power is the truth; and they belong to it who are trying to live here on earth, as well as they can, the life of heaven, — the life of goodness and usefulness, and love of man and God.

So he said that the kingdom of heaven is like a beautiful pearl for the sake of which a man sold all that he had and bought it; that is, the most important of all things is the life which is lived in obedience to God. And he said that the kingdom of heaven is like leaven, — or, as we say, yeast, — which is put into dough so that it makes bread; meaning that the citizens of the kingdom would little

by little change the world in which they live, and make it as different from the present world as bread is different from dough. And he said that the kingdom of heaven is like a grain of mustard seed, a very little seed, which grows up into a big tree, so that the birds built their nests in it; and that meant that the kingdom was indeed beginning very small, only a little company of disciples, but it should grow and grow and grow till it should include the whole world. These were some of the short stories. The longest of all was the Story of the Sower.

Once upon a time, our Lord said, a man went out to sow his field. The man had a large bag of grain by his side, and as he walked he kept putting his hand into the bag, and taking out the grain and scattering it over the ground. In the middle of the field there was a path, a hard path, trodden day after day by the feet of men and horses. Somebody was walking over it, or driving over it, all the time. Some of the seed fell on this beaten path. There was a place on one side where

the field lay at the foot of a hill, and the hill was made of rock, and over the rock the soil was very thin; only a few inches of earth, and then the rock beneath. In a corner of the field there had been a great many briers and thistles the year before, and they were just getting ready to start up again and make a bramble patch. The rest of the field was ploughed land, ready for seed.

So the man with the bag went back and forth across the field, scattering the grain. And some fell on the hard path, and some on the thin ground, and some among the brambles, and some on the good ploughed land. And pretty soon a man came walking along, wearing heavy boots, and, as he went along the path, he stepped on some of the seeds which lay there and broke them into little pieces. So they never grew. And by and by a bird came along that way and caught sight of the grain, and he was glad, for there was nothing that he liked better than grain. But, as he was a generous little bird, he took only a nibble or two and then flew away to tell all the

other little birds in that neighborhood that there was a fine dinner ready for them on the path, and would n't they like to come and eat it? So a whole flock of little birds came flying as fast as their wings could carry them, and lighted down among the grains of wheat, and in a very short time nothing was left there but the path. And so nothing ever grew out of that grain.

But the seeds in the shallow soil began to grow at once. When the sun came out, there was so little earth that it was warmed through very quickly: and as there is nothing which seeds like better than to be comfortably warm, the grain grew beautifully. Little leaves poked up their little green heads through the ground, and there they breathed the air and drank the rain, and every morning they were taller than they were the night before. But while seeds like to be warm, they object very much to being scorched. Unhappily, after these seeds had got their good start, and the stalks of wheat were beginning to say to themselves that they were much taller than any other wheat in

the field, — for the other wheat did not grow nearly so fast, — there came a very hot day. The sun blazed and blazed until the tall wheat felt as if it were living next door to a big bonfire. The little roots tried to get away from the hot sun, down in the cool earth: but there was the hard rock. They could not find a cool place anywhere. So the wheat began to wither. It began to feel like a man who has a sunstroke. At last it fell down flat upon the ground, and it never got up again. So that seed did not amount to anything.

Meanwhile, in the bramble patch the wheat was growing, but the thorns and thistles were growing also. Now all seeds need to have enough to eat, but thorns and thistles are like greedy children who try to get all the food there is upon the table. The corner of the field was the table, and the dirt was the food, and the thistles crowded out the wheat; and as there was not quite enough to go around, the wheat grew more and more hungry, and thinner and thinner, day by day, till it was

starved. And nobody ever got any grain from that seed.

But in the ploughed land, where the man came with a sharp hoe and cut away the weeds, the wheat grew and became taller and taller, until at last it was above the heads of the farmer's boys and girls, and the ears of wheat appeared; and finally, when the man who had planted the seed came to reap the harvest, he found that these seeds had grown into good wheat, a hundred times as much as he had sown.

That was the end of the story; but after the sermon was over some of our Lord's disciples came to him and said, "What did you mean by the Story of the Sower?" For they knew that he did not tell the story just for the pleasure of it. And so he told them. He said that the seed is like the word of God; that is, like the message which comes to us from God in a sermon, or in a book, or in a talk with a friend. And some who hear have hearts like the beaten path. Thoughts about other things are trampling up and down in them, like the man with the heavy boots; or such thoughts

are flying about and whispering to them, like the little twittering birds; so that the word of God does not make any impression upon them. They do not pay any attention to God. Others who hear are like the shallow places. They are at first greatly interested, full of joy and enthusiasm, and determined to do great things. But they go home, and the little daily duties and worries come; somebody teases them, somebody tempts them, somebody asks them to do what they do not like to do, and all the good resolutions wither away, like the grain in the hot sun. Others who hear are like the bramble patch. They begin well, and hold out bravely for a time, and really wish to mind the word of God. But bad things that used to grow in their hearts commence to grow again, like thistles in the field: briers of falsehood, briers of laziness, brambles of selfishness. And the good is crowded out. The easiest garden to take care of is a weed garden; it needs no care at all. But it is good for nothing. Some people, our Lord said, have weed gardens in their hearts.

But the true citizens of the kingdom try every day to do the King's will, to keep down all that is wrong in them, and to make what is right grow strong. They are like the good ground. In them God is well pleased.

XI

THE HERALD'S HEAD

WHILE the King did these works of wonder and spoke these words of wisdom, the King's herald lay in prison. You remember how sternly John the Baptist spoke to men who were living in sin, and how it made no difference to him whether the sinner was rich or poor. To the gentlemen who were proud of their good birth, he said that God, if he chose, could change the stones of the river-bank into descendants of Abraham, and that by their actions one would guess that their real father was that old serpent, the devil. Now Herod the Great, when he came to die, had divided his kingdom among his sons, and one of them, named Herod Antipas, thus became ruler in Galilee and beyond the Jordan. Of course, the Romans were the real rulers, but they appointed him as one of their governors. Herod Antipas was married to the princess of a little kingdom in Arabia, but about this time he went on a visit

to Rome to see his half-brother, Herod Philip; and while he was there he fell in love with Herod Philip's wife, whose name was Herodias. Then Herodias left her husband for Antipas, and Antipas's wife fled home in great distress and anger to her father. All the country knew about these scandalous and wicked doings. But Herodias and her daughter Salome came and lived in Herod Antipas's splendid palace at Tiberias on the Sea of Galilee, and nobody said anything, except in whispers, for it is not easy to reprove kings and queens.

But John the Baptist did not speak in a whisper. He spoke up in a great loud voice, and said in his sermons to the people, and at last to the king himself, that it was all terribly bad; and that it was against all laws of man and of God, that he should have his brother's wife. And that is how he went to prison. Herod had a great, black stone fortress beyond the Jordan, the fortress of Machærus, and there he put John into a dungeon. Herodias would have put him to death, but she was afraid of the people, for the people reverenced John.

Even Herod respected the brave man who was not afraid to speak the truth to the king's face.

So John lay in prison, though his disciples were allowed to come and visit him. It seemed very hard to the Baptist, after all his free life in the wilderness, to be shut up behind stone walls. He had not had even a roof over his head since he was a child. And one day, strong man as he was, he became very discouraged, and sent some of his disciples to Jesus, and said, "Are you truly the King? Are you he that should come, or must we look for another?" For John the Baptist, like the other people, was expecting a king like Herod — a better and mightier Herod. And when Jesus kept on living so quietly, and going about with a group of fishermen, and saying that his kingdom was not of this world, John knew not what to think. So John's disciples came with their master's question. And our Lord said, "Stay with me this day." So they stayed with him that day, and he did just what he was always doing: the blind received their sight, and the lame walked, the lepers were cleansed, and

the deaf heard, the dead were raised up, and the poor had the gospel preached to them. "Now," he said, "go back to John and show him what you have heard and seen." So they went back, but what John said we do not know.

Then Herod had a birthday, and he made a supper to his lords, high captains, and the chief people of Galilee. The tables were spread in a splendid room, with walls made beautiful with pictures, with dishes of silver and gold, music playing while the feast went on, and many servants bringing all sorts of pleasant things to eat. At last, when they had all had a great deal more to drink than was good for them, the king sent for Salome, the young daughter of Herodias, and she came in and danced, so that the king was delighted. And Herod, hardly knowing what he was saying, spoke up before all his nobles and said to the little daughter, "Ask of me whatsoever you will, and I will give it to you." And as she stopped to think, and all the guests were looking at him and at her, "Yes," he cried, "whatsoever

thou shalt ask of me, I will give it to thee, unto the half of my kingdom."

There was the promise, then, and the child could have her wish. What should it be? Among all the beautiful things in the world, what shall the princess choose? One day, King Solomon had a chance to ask for what he wanted most, and he asked for wisdom. But the king cannot give wisdom; indeed, this king had no wisdom to spare. Well, lovely gowns, then, or jewels, or gardens, or money to buy them all. It was a hard matter to decide, and the girl went to ask her mother; a very good thing to do, if she had had a good mother.

But now Herodias saw her opportunity. All this time she had been longing to have her revenge for what John the Baptist had said about her. They were hard words, and the worst of it was, she had deserved them all: but so much the more she hated him. Already, as we have seen, she had tried to have him killed. Now was the time. So Salome went out and said to her mother, "What

shall I ask?" And Herodias said, "The head of John the Baptist." And Salome came running back in great haste into the dining-room, and cried out in a high voice, so that everybody heard what she said, "I will that thou give me by and by in a charger [that is, on a great platter] the head of John the Baptist."

Then what did the king do? If he had been a good king, he would have told his daughter what a wicked thing that was to ask. But he did not do that. He was exceedingly sorry. But he had promised to give her anything she wished, and she had wished for John the Baptist's head, and he did not consider that we ought never to keep bad promises. The only thing to do if we make a wicked promise, is to break it. He was afraid that his nobles would laugh at him if he did not do what he said he would. For their sakes which sat with him, he would not reject her. So he sent an executioner, and commanded his head to be brought; and the executioner went and beheaded the herald of the King of Glory in the prison. So he died, whose birth the angel

had promised at the altar, whose name had been given him amidst the rejoicings of his father and mother and their friends, who had lived for years in the wild woods, and then had come forth to welcome the King of kings. And his head was brought in by the executioner, on a great silver platter, and the executioner gave it to the girl, and the girl gave it to her mother.

XII

TWELVE BASKETS OF PIECES

At the time of the beheading of John the Baptist, the apostles were on a journey about the country, two by two. Our Lord had sent them to teach as they had heard him teach, and to cast out devils and heal the sick. So they had been walking pleasantly between the green fields, two by this road and two by that, each man with a staff in his hand, speaking in the market-places, going home to dinner and to spend the night, if any good citizen invited them, or, if there were no such invitation, sleeping on the hay in the meadow and quenching their thirst in the cool streams.

Now they came home to tell our Lord how God had blessed them beyond all their expectations, but they brought the bad news with them of the death of the herald. Our Lord saw, too, that they were very tired, for there had been so many people coming and going about them that they had no leisure so much

as to eat. So he said, "Come now apart into a desert place and rest a while." For he knew that tired people cannot be of much use to their neighbors. They got into a boat, therefore, and rowed out into the lake. They were both tired and sad. In the death of the Baptist they saw not only the loss of a friend, but the murder of a prophet. John had met the fate of many prophets. Would it be their own fate also?

So they rowed in silence across the narrow lake and landed where there were no houses. There was much grass in the place, and back from the water were low wooded hills. There they sat down to rest. But the people had seen them departing, and they said one to another, "There is the Prophet. He is going with his disciples across the lake. Let us go too." And they made haste on foot, running along the road about the head of the lake; and as they went the crowd increased, for when they hurried through the street of any village everybody came to the doors and windows, crying, "Where are you going? What

is the matter?" And they said, "We are going to find the Prophet of Nazareth." And the men and women and even the children cried, "We will go with you!" So there was a great multitude. There were even sick persons among them. As the crowd ran by the house, father Josiah would say to mother Miriam, "The Prophet is yonder in the fields. Shall we not carry our little Deborah, and ask him to make her well?" And away they would go, carrying Deborah on a blanket between them.

By and by, therefore, a distant sound was heard in the beautiful stillness where the Master and the apostles rested in their weariness and sadness. And one said, "It is like the sound of many voices." Another said, "I hear the tramping of many feet." And a third stood up to look, and said, "A great, great crowd is coming." Did our Lord say, "But we are tired and sad; let us go back upon the hills, and hide us from their sight among the trees?" No; the moment he saw the people his heart was filled with compassion

toward them, because they were as sheep not having a shepherd; and he began to teach them many things, and to heal those who were sick among them.

But when the evening came his disciples came to him and said, "This is a desert place, and now the time is far passed. Send them away, that they may go into the country round about, and into the villages, and buy themselves food; for they have nothing to eat." They had come out in such great haste and eagerness that they had brought nothing with them. Our Lord said to Philip, "Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat?" Philip answered, "It would take two hundred dollars to buy enough to give each one even a single piece of bread." Our Lord said, "How much have we? Go and see." And Andrew came back and said, "There is a lad here with five barley loaves and two small fishes. But what are they among so many?" Even now, when there is a great work to be done for man and God, one disciple says, "It is impossible," while another says, "Here is something to

begin with." And our Lord still does as he did then; he takes the small beginning and makes it great.

And Jesus said, "Make the men sit down." So the men sat down, by companies of hundreds and fifties, on the green grass, in number about five thousand. And he took the five loaves and the two fishes and looked up to heaven, and blessed and brake the loaves, and gave them to his disciples to set before them; and the two fishes divided he among them all. So they went forth, — the twelve apostles, — each with a fragment of bread and a bit of fish which our Lord had blessed, and each gave to one man, and then to another man, and then to still another, and behold, there was still enough to give, and so it went till they had all eaten, all the five thousand, and women and children beside. And after they were satisfied, he told the apostles to gather up the fragments that remained, that nothing should be lost. Therefore they gathered them together, and filled twelve baskets with the fragments of the five barley loaves, which

remained over and above unto them that had eaten. Every apostle filled his lunch basket full.

Then these men, when they had seen the miracle which Jesus did, said, "This is of a truth that Prophet which should come into the world;" meaning the Messiah. And some said, "Come, he is the Messiah; let us make him our King." And all rose up, all the five thousand, with great shouts, waving their arms, calling him their King. And when he started to go away and to escape them, telling them that he could never be the kind of king they meant, they tried to compel him, even by force. And still he refused and resisted, freeing himself from their hands, sending his disciples away to their boats, and himself going in the gathering dusk into a mountain alone.

That was the turning-point of our Lord's ministry. Up to that time, his disciples had been many, crowds greeted him and followed him wherever he went. There were those, indeed, who greatly disliked him, and sometimes already they had even threatened that they

STATE NORMAL SCHOOL,
LOS ANGELES, CAL.

would kill him. But the common people heard him gladly. Now, however, there was a reaction. He had told them plainly that he would never be a king such as they wished; and they would not have him as the King of truth. The next day he spoke in the synagogue in Capernaum, and said things which were so hard to understand that from that time many of his disciples went back and walked no more with him. He was not quite sure even of the twelve, and said, "Will ye also go away?" But Peter answered for them all, saying, "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life."

Then the next day came scribes from Jerusalem, and met our Lord as he walked in the street, and reproved him in the presence of the people, saying that he dishonored God because he did not keep the customs. They said that all men who became our Lord's disciples ceased to be good churchmen. But our Lord reproved them, saying that God was dishonored by their customs. He said that their religion was in their lips and not in their

hearts. God, he said, did not care for their petty rules: he is to be served by honesty, and mercy, and truth, and a good life. And he called them blind leaders of the blind.

After that, in Galilee as well as in Judea, our Lord was hated by more and more people, some of whom sought his life. He had to go away, out of his own land, into the heathen countries round about.

IV

How the King was hated more and more and could not stay even in Galilee; how he went among the Heathen, and then into the Land across the Jordan; and how at last he set his Face towards Jerusalem.

I

WHY THE KING WAS HATED

It seems to us very strange and sad that the King was rejected by the citizens of his own kingdom. But so it was. Among the enemies of our Lord there was not one who had ever been in jail. On the contrary, those who were the most bitter against him were generally thought to be uncommonly good people. Twice every week they fasted. Out of every hundred dollars which they earned, they gave ten to the church. Some of them were ministers: some — as we would say — were wardens and vestrymen. They were all church-members. It is true that our Lord said that they were hypocrites; which means that they were not so good as they seemed to be, and that their religion was in their lips rather than in their hearts. But even their badness was the badness of good people.

One reason why they hated our Lord was

that they were very formal and precise persons, while he was always perfectly natural, direct, and simple. Many of the things which he said and did shocked them greatly. For example, the name by which they thought of God was Jehovah, but they felt that that name was so sacred that they ought never to speak it nor write it. On the other hand, our Lord, who was in God and God in him, and to whom praying was as natural as breathing, spoke of God as one whom he knew very well, calling him Father, even using the name Abba by which the little Hebrew boys and girls addressed their fathers. So they said that our Lord was a blasphemer: that is, one who speaks disrespectfully of God.

Another reason why they hated our Lord was that he paid so little attention to some of their customs. They had a great many ways of doing things, which to us seem strange and even foolish, but which they considered so important that they felt that anybody who did differently was bad. Some of these customs were connected with the keeping of the sab-

bath, some with the washing of hands, some with the treatment of outsiders.

Thus, they had a good law that men should not work in the fields on the sabbath: nobody should cut grain or thresh it. The purpose was to give all laboring folk a day off every week for rest. But they were so afraid that the law might be broken, that they said that if any one even picked a single head of wheat and rubbed it in his hands to get a kernel from the husk, he was cutting grain and threshing it. One day, our Lord and his disciples went across a field of wheat, and the disciples began, as they went, to pluck the spears of grain. And the scribes said, "Behold, thy disciples do that which is not lawful to do upon the sabbath day." But our Lord paid no heed to their complaint.

They had another law that all persons should wash their hands before they sat down to dinner: an excellent habit, if one's hands need washing. But their idea was that a great many things in the world are unclean, or, as we might say, unlucky. If anybody touched

these things, God did not like him till he had washed off the unlucky touch. But our Lord knew better. The things, he said, which God does not like are bad works and bad actions. And he told his disciples that they did not need to wash their hands in order to keep the favor of God.

They were also very careful about associating with outsiders, who did not belong to the church. Some of these were Gentiles, that is, heathen people; some were Samaritans, who were part Jews and part heathen; some were publicans, who were in the employ of the heathen; some were plain sinners. The Jews would not eat with such persons, nor would they willingly have any dealings with them. They despised and hated them. But our Lord felt that people who were living in ignorance and sin should be helped to be better, and he knew that in order to help anybody one must first make friends with him. Sometimes he said that he was like a shepherd who goes in search of a sheep which is lost. Sometimes he said that he was like a physician whose busi-

JESUS AND THE WOMAN OF SAMARIA

ness is to care for those who are sick. He was going through Samaria, one time, and being thirsty and tired he sat down on a stone by a well, and a Samaritan woman came to draw water. She was a Samaritan, and, besides that, a person of bad character; but our Lord spoke to her kindly. Sometimes, when the scribes wished to call him by a bad name, they said that he was a Samaritan himself, and that he was a friend of publicans and sinners. They felt towards publicans and Samaritans as people in some southern towns feel towards negroes.

It was for these reasons that when the King came unto his own, his own received him not. They were interested in little things: he was interested in great things. They were busy with seeds and herbs, — mint, anise, and cummin, — tying them up in ten bundles, to give one bundle to the church. He was intent on justice, mercy, and truth. They were thinking about their customs; he was thinking about God and man. And they hated him. They saw that he was a prophet, and that the people

crowded about him: they could not help seeing that he was preaching truth and goodness; but he was unlike them, and they hated him. It has happened many times since then. That was all that they had against him: that his custom of keeping the sabbath, and of washing his hands, and of dealing with outsiders was different from theirs. But that was enough. They went to church, and said their prayers, and read their Bibles, and fasted twice in the week, — and hated the King of Glory.

The result was that it was no longer safe for him to live in his own country. He had never spent much time in Judea, except to go to Jerusalem for the great church festivals. Galilee had been the place of his ministry, and especially that portion of it which lies about the northern part of the lake. But after the scribes came up from Jerusalem and attacked him in Capernaum, he could not stay in Galilee. The great people turned against him, and the common people — disappointed because he would not be their king — followed their example. He was no longer surrounded by

enthusiastic crowds. Men and women looked at him with eyes of suspicion and dislike. They spoke one to another as he passed by, saying, "There goes the prophet of Nazareth. Have you heard how the scribes from Jerusalem reproved him and disowned him? He is a sabbath breaker, and a despiser of our holy customs, and associates with low people. There is Matthew, the publican, speaking to him this moment." And there were threats against his life.

So he took his twelve friends, and they went away together. He never stood again on the hills of Nazareth. He never spoke again to the people on the shore of the lake, nor sat in a fisherman's boat. He walked no more between the pleasant fields. As they went they looked back for a last sight of the place where they had lived. They saw the white houses of Chorazin and Bethsaida and Capernaum shining against the blue line of the water. And our Lord took his leave, with great grief. "Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works had been done in Tyre and

Sidon which have been done in you, they had a great while ago repented, sitting in sackcloth and ashes. And thou, Capernaum! high and lifted up, thou shalt be brought low." Then he turned about and set his face towards Tyre and Sidon, cities of the heathen.

II

IN THE LAND OF TYRE AND SIDON

So our Lord and his twelve friends went away, leaving the Lake of Galilee and the fishing-nets behind them: and by and by, when the road climbed the high hills, there was a silver line along the far horizon which meant the salt sea, the Mediterranean. Beyond lay Greece, and then Italy, and then Spain; and north of Spain, France and England; and west, across the unknown ocean, America. He looked out into the wide world. He was a fugitive, driven from his native land; but heaven was his true native land, and he was Lord of Life. There were great thoughts in his heart, of which the twelve friends knew nothing. He had now ended that part of his ministry in which he had gone about among his own people, speaking words of wisdom and doing works of wonder. He was still to teach and still to bless, but the greater part of his time was to be given to the Twelve. One purpose of this journey

into a foreign country was that he might be with them more intimately. He was to prepare them to carry on his work after his death. For he saw now that he must expect death.

Presently, they came to a little town near the great seaport of Tyre, where the signs over the shop doors were in Greek, and the people said "Good-morning" in Greek when they met in the street. There he found a lodging, and went in and shut the door. He felt that he was in a place where nobody knew him, and was glad. After what had happened, he wished to be alone. But he could not be hid. It may be that some dim rumor of him had traveled even over those long roads. For there were people coming and going. As long ago as King Solomon's time men had gone from Tyre to Jerusalem on business, as brass-workers and wood-carvers, as artists and architects. Some such person, working in the temple or in Herod's palace at Tiberias may have brought the word. Somebody may have seen him in Judea or in Galilee, and now, seeing him again, recognized him.

Or, perhaps, they knew him without having seen him. As he passed by, they observed him. They did not need to be very keen of sight to perceive that he was different from other men. One day, Paul and Barnabas, journeying through Asia Minor, came into a place, and the people running together cried, "The gods are come down to us in the likeness of men!" They guessed that by the way Paul and Barnabas looked. They said at once that Barnabas, who was a tall, fine-looking man, must be Jupiter, and that Paul, who talked a great deal, must be Mercury. And here, in the land of Tyre and Sidon, was God indeed, the almighty and eternal God, come down in the likeness of a man. He could not be hid. Men pointed after him as he walked along the street, and women looked out at him from the windows of the houses, saying, "Who is this?"

Thus it was that news of his arrival reached a woman who was sitting by the bedside of her sick daughter. She was a heathen woman: they were all heathen in the neighborhood of Tyre and Sidon. She was one of those out-

siders whom the scribes so much disliked. Her little girl had been brought up a heathen. She had never heard of the wanderings of Abraham, but she knew all about the wanderings of Ulysses. She had never been told of the adventures of Samson, but her mother had told her many, many times the brave stories of the adventures of Hercules. She was quite ignorant of Aaron and the Golden Calf, but she could have told you of Jason and the Golden Fleece. She was a little heathen maiden, and said her prayers to the little statue of a Greek god, for that was the best she knew. And now she was very sick, and had been in that sad state a long time. Something was the matter with her head, so that she said disconnected, foolish things when she talked. As her mother said, she was grievously vexed with a devil. That is all that her mother knew about it, and we ourselves, as I have said before, know little more.

The news came, then, that some great one was come to town; out of the land of Israel, some said; and others added — either guess-

ing or having questioned the apostles — that he was a son of David, a king and priest in one, like the Wise Men of the East; a god in the likeness of a man. Nobody quite knew who he was, but he was good and great; anybody could see that. So the next neighbor on one side came in and said, "Why don't you go to the Son of David and tell him of the sickness of your daughter? Why don't you get him to lay his hand on her and make her well?" And the next neighbor on the other side said, "You go and speak to him, and I will stay with the little girl while you are gone."

So the mother went. She met our Lord and the Twelve walking in the street, and immediately she cried to him, "Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou Son of David: my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil." For that is how mothers feel about their children. "Have mercy on me," she said: not, "Have mercy on my daughter." The daughter's pain was the mother's pain. "O Lord, thou Son of David, hear me and help me!" But our Lord said not a word.

Here was a marvelous thing. He who had never before turned a deaf ear to any call of distress said not a word. On he went in silence, the Twelve about him, and the mother following. I told you that when people cry in the East, they cry with their lips as well as with their eyes. And so she did. She cried so that women heard her in their kitchens, where they were busy about the stove, and came running to the door to see what was the matter. Men came hurrying around the corners of the street. There was a crowd. Jesus went on, and she came after crying, and the crowd followed.

At last the apostles said, "Master, send her away, for she cries after us. We came here to be hid, and she is raising the whole town about our heels." The apostles were annoyed and impatient. I wish that one of them had said, "Master, is there not something which we can do for her?" But they showed no pity. There was a time, in the Middle Ages, when people had an idea that it was a good plan to pray to the saints. The saints, they thought, would be more likely to hear them than God.

This story does not bear out that belief. Of course, Peter and Andrew, and James and John and the others were better men afterwards than they were that day in the Tyrian village; but I should think that when this remark of theirs was read in church, it might have discouraged some of those who were praying to them. Might not Peter still be inclined to say, "Send her away, for she crieth after us?" One time, our Lord and the Twelve were going to Jerusalem, and they came at nightfall to a village in Samaria, and nobody would take them in; and James and John proposed that he should call down thunder and lightning and destroy them all. None of the saints — even the best of them — has ever been so loving as he.

But this time our Lord answered his apostles, and it seemed for the moment that he would do as they suggested. "I am not sent," he said, "but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." That is, the lost sheep for whom I am seeking are not of this heathen fold. I am concerned about the Jewish sheep. And so

he was. He had, indeed, been criticised for his brotherly dealings with outsiders, but up to this time he had really had little to do with them. When he sent his apostles out to preach and heal, he had told them to go only to the Jews. Because all good work must begin with the doing of one thing well. Nobody succeeds who is content to help a great many people a little. The true way is to help a few people a great deal. Then these few will be helpers in their turn. Thus, more slowly but more surely, will the great work be done. Accordingly, our Lord had addressed himself to the Jews, his own people. He had sought the lost sheep of the house of Israel. That, as he said, had been his mission. That had been his wise plan. Thus he spoke, and the woman heard.

Did that send her away? Not for a moment. It may be that the tone of voice explained the words, so that she knew that he was but thinking aloud, considering what he would better do: "Thus have I done through all my ministry; shall I now change?" Anyhow, the woman made her way through the reluctant

company of the apostles, past St. Peter and St. John and St. Simon the Zealot and St. Matthew the Publican, and fell down on her knees at our Lord's feet, so that he stood still, looking at her. "Lord, help me!" she cried, and there was hope and faith in her voice. The saints were no friends of hers, but he would be her friend. "Lord, help me!" But he answered, half musing and half smiling, "It is not meet to take the children's bread and to cast it to dogs." As if he said, "Don't you know that I am a Jew, and that Jews believe that they belong to the household of the heavenly Father, while you Gentiles are but dogs?" Did he think, as he spoke, of the contrast between the cold unbelief of the scribes, with their great pretensions, and the warm faith of this heathen woman whom they despised? Did he take these hard words upon his lips, showing by his tone of voice that he did but quote the common saying of his narrow countrymen, and that he had no sympathy with it? It is plain, at least, that the woman understood him. She looked into his face

and saw only kindness there. "Shall the dogs," he said, "ask for the children's bread?" "Yes, Lord," she cried, "not the bread, but the crumbs; even the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their master's table." And the Lord replied, "O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee according as thou wilt."

So the woman went home with a glad heart, and before she got to the house there were the neighbors running out to meet her, and the little girl herself stood at the gate.

III

WHAT A BLIND MAN SAW

THEN our Lord spent a long time in the country which lies to the north and to the east of the land of the Jews. Several times he appeared unexpectedly in Jerusalem, on the great church days, and there spoke in public places where large companies heard him. But he never spent the night in town. He had a friend named Lazarus, who with two sisters, Mary and Martha, lived in Bethany, a little place near Jerusalem. It is likely that he was their guest. It was not safe for him to stay in the city, for the Jews sought to kill him.

On these occasions the people were much perplexed about him, not knowing what to think. We can even hear them talking among themselves, quite as the Romans talk in Shakespeare's play when Julius Cæsar rides in procession. As the Master speaks, First Citizen says to his neighbor, "Of a truth, this is the Prophet." Second Citizen answers, with em-

phasis, striking one hand upon the other, "This is the Christ." But Third Citizen rebukes them, crying, "He hath a devil and is mad; why hear ye him?" To which First Citizen and Second Citizen indeed reply, "These are not the words of him that hath a devil;" but they do not speak with much assurance, and by and by, at the urging of the authorities, all these citizens begin to look about in the road for stones to throw at him.

There were two parties in the state and in the church. Those who belonged to one party were called Sadducees; those who belonged to the other were called Pharisees. The priests of the temple and most of the officers of government were Sadducees; the ministers of the synagogues were Pharisees. The Sadducees carried on elaborate services; the Pharisees cared more for sermons. The Sadducees were a small party, confined almost entirely to Jerusalem; the Pharisees included in their party most of the good, earnest, religious people of the nation. It was the Pharisees who hated our Lord

JESUS WITH MARY AND MARTHA AT BETHANY

because he disregarded their customs. The Sadducees hated him because they were afraid that he would stir up a revolution. "The Romans will come," they said, "and take away our place and nation." One day the two parties united in sending the police to arrest our Lord, intending to shut him up in jail. But the officers came back empty-handed. "Why have ye not brought him?" cried the Sadducees and Pharisees. The officers answered, "Never man spake like this man." They had stood in the crowd, listening to him.

From these visits, as I said, our Lord returned to the lands where there were no Jews, or very few. One day he was in the city of Bethsaida. This was not the fishing town where some of the Twelve had lived, but a place at the head of the lake, mostly inhabited by Romans. There the signs in the shop windows were in Latin, and even the smallest boys and girls spoke Latin as they played together in the street. Our Lord was walking along, and there came to him a little group of men leading a blind man.

Now, the fact that one cannot see does not imply that he cannot speak. Indeed, this man did finally speak; but not at first. At first he said never a word, letting his friends do all the talking. Probably the man came to Jesus because he was persuaded by his friends. He had no desire to come. He had been to all the doctors, and not one had given him a ray of light. He had no faith in doctors. "But this is not a doctor," said his friends. "This is a man of God. When he speaks, even in Bethsaida, God hears in heaven and answers." So they persuaded him. "Very well," he said, "I will go to please you, but I don't believe in it. It is all folly and delusion. And I will not ask him to heal me. You may, if you choose, but not I." Thus he came into our Lord's presence, actually blind, and practically dumb.

Our Lord took the blind man by the hand and led him out of the town. He took him away alone, apart from all his friends. This he did partly that he might have a chance to talk to the man quietly and intimately, and partly

that the blind man might have a chance to talk to him. For after the man had declared to his friends that he would not say a word, not a word was he likely to say so long as his friends were by to hear. Along they went, then, the Master and the man, down one street and up another, past the houses, out into the green country. With every step, as our Lord held the man's hand and talked in his gentle and wonderful way, the man's mind began to change; he began to think that one who could speak in that way could do whatsoever he would. Indeed, the walk was a necessary part of the cure, for if the man continued in his indifference and unbelief, our Lord himself could not help him. Thus, one time in a certain place, our Lord could do no mighty work because of the unbelief of the people. The faith of the man himself was an essential part of the miracle. And on the way, the man's faith grew.

At last, they were quite out of the town, and our Lord stopped. He touched his fingers to his lips and placed them on the man's blind

eyes. "Now," he said, as he took away his hand, "do you see anything?" The man looked up, and there was a strange new light before him, as if after a black night the sun were dimly rising far away. "Yes," the man cried, "I can see! I can see! Why, I see men walking about like trees!" What did he mean? He said that he could see trees and men coming hand in hand along the country road, looking like brothers. That, I suppose, is the way in which even now we see with our minds. We see God and great truths about him and ourselves in a dim, confused way, like the man who saw the procession of the trees. He was like one who walks in a fog. Sometimes in a fog it is hard to tell, at a little distance, which are trees and which are men. So we look about, ignorantly, in this wonderful world.

But after that, Jesus put his hands upon his eyes and made him look up; and he was restored, and saw every man clearly. That clear sight, we hope, will come sometime to us, and we shall understand the meaning of the words

and works of God. Then our Lord sent the man away to his home, saying, "Do not go into the town, nor tell it to any in the town." For he did not wish to draw a crowd about him, nor about the man.

IV

A ROCK FOR A CORNER-STONE

In those days our Lord and the Twelve were continually going about from place to place, mostly among heathen people. Wherever they went, they walked; and as they walked, they talked. Many people passed them on the road without looking at them twice. Men with garden stuff to sell at the next market pushed on, leaving the Twelve and the Master in a cloud of dust; and when their wives said, "What did you see when you went to town to-day?" they shook their heads, saying that they had seen no sights. They had passed St. Peter and St. John and St. Andrew and St. James and eight other apostles, and the Lord in the midst of them! If a single marketman had but stopped and asked two sensible questions, no matter what, and then when he reached home had written down the answers and kept them for us, he would have been one of the benefactors of the race, and famous to the end of

time. Suppose he had said, "What is it of which you men are talking as you walk and are glad?" But they all went on about their dull business and asked nothing.

One day, as the Twelve were speaking of their experiences in their own country, before they were driven out, our Lord said, "What do they say of me? What did you hear as you went about? Whom do men say that I am?" The Twelve answered, "Most men say that you are John the Baptist come to life again; though some think that you are Elijah; while others have a vague idea that you are one of the old prophets, they know not which."

The people do not seem to have thought of him as meek and lowly. Both John the Baptist and Elijah were strong, masterful persons, who came with a great message from God, and defied kings. The prophet, as I said, was commonly a revolutionist, dangerous to all bad men. Such was the impression which Jesus made upon such of his countrymen as were but slightly acquainted with him. They saw that he was a kind and tender friend to all

who were in trouble, and that he seemed to belong to heaven rather than to earth, like a saint come down from Paradise on a short visit; but they saw also that he was very stern to those who were setting their customs above the word of God, and wearing pious faces to make men think them better than they were, and that he was one who at any moment might begin to cast down the mighty from their seats. Many persons, for excellent reasons, were afraid of him. This is what the apostles had heard as they sat at people's tables in the country towns.

"But whom say ye that I am?" Then Peter, who was a quick, impulsive person, always first to speak and first to act, said, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." And the Lord answered, "Blessed art thou, Peter. No man told you that. You have been taught it from heaven. And now I say that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Towns had gates in that country, and there men gathered to-

gether, talking and making plans and bargains. Our Lord said that all the plots of the wicked should not prevail against his church.

Had he been teaching them about the church? We do not know. All that we know is that for a moment he looked into the long future. There he stood, hated by the leaders of the church to which he belonged, forsaken by most of his disciples, with only the Twelve about him, and they, like him, fugitives from their own country, in the midst of strangers. It seemed a situation which called for grief and discouragement. It looked like utter failure. But he knew how that which we call failure is sometimes splendid success in God's sight. He saw the church founded on a rock, and builded to the skies.

Peter's name was Simon, and when he was called by his full name, it was Simon Bar-jona, which means in English, Simon Johnson. But our Lord had named him Peter, meaning stone or rock, as a man on whom he could depend. Peter had now said the word on which the church should stand: "Thou art the Christ,

the Son of the living God." Immediately our Lord warned the disciples that they must keep all this a secret. Peter had spoken the truth; they knew now who their great friend was; but they must not tell. If they did tell, it was certain that the Pharisees and Sadducees would kill him.

For neither the Sadducees nor the Pharisees could believe that one so unlike themselves was the Son of the living God. If he was, then they were all wrong, and must change the whole course of their lives. Everything that they stood for was at stake. They already suspected that this was what he claimed to be. Once they tried to get him to confess it, saying, "How long dost thou make us to doubt? If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly." But he would not tell them. The moment he told them, his ministry and his life together would come to a sudden end; he would die a death of violence. Sometime, indeed, they must be told, but not yet; and when the time came, he himself would tell them. Meanwhile, he made the apostles promise to keep the great truth

to themselves. Even they could hardly see more than the beginning of its meaning. They were like the man who saw men looking like trees. But there it was, the supreme truth which is at the heart of the church, and by which we all live; that in Jesus Christ God spoke to us and dwelt amongst us. On this rock, as on a corner-stone, the church is founded.

He began to teach them that the Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected and be killed. He added that he would be raised again from the dead, but they did not understand that. The fact which affected them was that their Master must die. Now that they really knew him, and knew that he was divine as well as human, he must be violently parted from them, and be put to death. Why must he die, a young man, hardly more than thirty years of age? They could not bear it. And Peter, speaking again in his quick way, cried, "Be it far from thee, Lord; this shall never be unto thee." To which he replied in words which mean, "I know how hard it is; I who

love life and hate death. All my human nature bids me to escape. I pray God even now that this bitter cup may somehow be taken away from me, that I may not drink it. But I know that the end will be as I have said. And you too, friends, must suffer. You in your turn must take up your cross and follow me to death."

V

THE KING IN HIS BEAUTY

Among the Twelve were three whom our Lord loved more than the others. This he showed by liking to have them near him. Thus, when he went into the room where the minister's little daughter lay, white and cold, upon her bed, he left nine apostles outside, and took with him only these three, Peter and James and John. This was not because they were so much better than the others. None of the nine, except Judas, made such mistakes or had such faults as the three. I suppose that the explanation is that Peter and James and John loved him more, and he was able to give them more of his love because they were able to receive it. Anyhow, he preferred their company.

One day he took these three with him to climb a mountain, leaving the nine to wait in the valley. And on the way down he said, "You must not tell. You must keep it a deep secret until I shall rise from the dead." They

did not know what he meant by rising from the dead, but they promised him that they would tell no man what they had seen upon the height. Then for months and months they went about remembering a strange and wonderful sight, and wishing that they could speak of it to Andrew and Philip and the rest, but saying never a word till the time came. For they knew how to keep a secret. Then they told.

They said, "You remember that day when we knew for the first time that our Master was the King of Glory, and when for the first time he told us that he must be put to death. You remember how we thought about it all that week, and talked among ourselves sometimes with pride and sometimes with grief, and how at the end of the week we three went away with him alone while you stayed below. That night a marvelous thing happened, but he told us not to tell. Now the time has come when there is no more need of secrecy. Listen, thus it was." And they spoke, while the others sat about them with open ears and eyes.

It was towards the end of the day, when our Lord and the three began to ascend the mountain. As they were going up, the sun was going down. And the shadows deepened on their path, and the stars came out; and below, when they came to a clear place and could look off, the lights of the scattered farmhouses, like other stars, were shining in the dark. Presently they stopped, and were silent in the solemn stillness. And our Lord began to pray. It was for this he had brought them apart upon the mountain, that they might feel the presence of God, and pray.

He liked to pray in lonely places. Sometimes, as when he was at Capernaum, he rose very early in the morning and went to the shore of the lake, and there walked, looking at the sky and at the ground, with holy thoughts in his heart. Once he told his disciples that it was a good plan, when they prayed, to shut the door. Some of the Pharisees had a way of saying their prayers standing on the corner of the street, folding their hands and lifting their eyes to heaven, so that

people who passed by should say, "See that good man!" Our Lord did not approve of that. He greatly disliked every form of "showing off." So he said to his disciples, "When you pray, go into your room and close the door." That night on the mountain the darkness was like a door between him and the world.

There, then, he prayed, not asking God to give him this or that, but simply standing in the presence of God, as a little child stands by his father's knee; feeling the nearness and the love of God, praying in his heart rather than with his lips. But the three were tired, and it was late, and the night was dark and still. One would hardly think that the saints would go to sleep saying their prayers; but these saints did. As they prayed their eyes grew heavy, and before they knew it they were fast asleep. How long they slept, they did not know; but suddenly, in the midst of their dreams, they saw a light. They opened their eyes, heavy with sleep, and there was our Lord still praying, but now his

clothes were shining with a dazzling whiteness, like the clouds on a bright day, and his face was like the sun when it looks down at noon. There he stood, the King of Glory indeed, no longer dressed like a carpenter, but clad in radiant garments like the angels, with the glory of heaven reflected in his eyes. And there were two men with him. How Peter and John and James knew them I cannot tell, unless it was by hearing how our Lord addressed them; for they had not come up from the valley, but down from the sky, having died hundreds and hundreds of years before. One was Moses, who met God on Mt. Sinai and brought down the Ten Commandments. The other was Elijah, who prayed to God on Mt. Carmel, and was wonderfully answered with lightning and rain. Our Lord stood between these two great men and they talked together, and the three disciples, half asleep and half awake, heard dimly that the subject of their conversation was our Lord's approaching dreadful death, of which he had spoken a week before. Indeed, it was as if the words which he had then uttered were

now wonderfully acted out: the Son of the living God in his divine glory speaking of the cross.

And when the heavenly visitants made as if they would return to that blessed paradise whence they had come, Peter started up, in his impulsive way, as if to detain them. Hardly knowing what he said, through fear and sleep, "Master," he cried, "it is good for us to be here. Let us make three tents, one for thee and one for Moses and one for Elijah." He and his two companions would pull down branches from the trees, that Jesus and Moses and Elijah might stay upon the mountain. But as he was speaking, there came a swift and blinding cloud, like a sudden fog blown in from the sea, and the disciples were filled with fear, and fell upon the ground, covering their faces with their hands. And out of the cloud came a voice, such as had spoken at our Lord's baptism, saying, "This is my beloved Son; hear him." And Jesus came and touched them, saying, "Arise, be not afraid." And when they looked up, it was dark night again, with

the stars shining, and they saw no man any more save Jesus only with themselves.

Then, the next day, as they went down, he told them not to tell. And they kept it in their hearts, remembering how they had seen his glory, the glory of the Son of God.

VI

THE LAD AT THE FOOT OF THE HILL

The next day after the vision of the King of Glory, two very different groups of people were approaching one another from different directions. One was our Lord and the three disciples coming down the hill, the other was a man and a boy making their way along the valley.

This boy had something strange and dreadful the matter with him. Sometimes at home his mother would hear a loud cry of distress in the next room, and running in, would find the boy in the middle of the fire. And he would say that somebody had pushed him in; but there was nobody in the room except the lad himself. Close by his house was a deep pond, and the boy was always getting into it. The moment he found that no one was watching him he would run and jump and throw himself into the water, so that many times he was almost drowned. And he would say that

somebody had taken him by the shoulders and thrust him in; but nobody was ever to be seen who could have done so mean a thing. Then, when he was playing with the other boys, something would happen which was not in the game. He would suddenly give a cry, and fall upon the ground and gnash his teeth, and foam at the mouth. And he would say that somebody had knocked him down, but not a hand had touched him. Besides all this, he was deaf and dumb. Never a word could he either hear or speak. And he kept growing weaker, pining away, so that it seemed as if he must soon die.

The secret of it all was that he had an evil spirit; that is, as we say nowadays, he had times of being violently crazy.

Of course, his father and mother had called in all the doctors, and even the ministers; for the ministers were sometimes able to cure crazy people. But none of them had helped him. At last, the news came that the Prophet of Nazareth was in that neighborhood. The lad's parents did not quite know who the Prophet

of Nazareth was: for some said this and some said that about him. There was a rumor that the people of his own country had cast him out. All agreed, however, that he was very kind, and that he had expelled many devils. So in the early morning of that day, the father spoke to the boy, making motions with his hands, and told him that they were to take a long walk, and that at the end of the road they would find one who would make him well, so that he should no longer fall into the fire or into the water.

But the two reached the foot of the hill before the Master and the three came down. Only the nine were there. Meanwhile a crowd had gathered. There were friends of the family who had come along to see the cure, and many idle persons such as are always ready to follow a crowd, and some of the ministers. For although it was a heathen country, some Jews were living there. The father said, "Where is the Prophet?" The apostles answered, "He is in the mountain. Last night he went up, leaving us here to wait for him." "When will

he come down?" "We do not know; perhaps to-day, perhaps not till to-morrow. What do you want?" "I have brought my sick son. You are the Prophet's disciples, can you not cast out a devil?" "Oh, yes!" they said, "we know how to cast out devils. Bring the boy to us." So the boy was brought, and the multitude pressed in on every side, and Matthew and Andrew and the others prayed and made motions, and tried to do what they had seen the Master do, but all in vain. The boy lay upon the ground in great distress; his father was in despair; and the disappointed people were becoming more and more angry. "These men are impostors," some were saying. "Shall we not stone them?"

All this time our Lord was coming down along the quiet road beneath the trees, with the three disciples beside him. But as they neared the foot of the hill they began to hear loud voices, as of men in a dispute, and now and then a scream, as if there were some one in distress. And presently they came in sight of the noisy

crowd, who were shaking their fists in the apostles' faces. And somebody looked up, and cried, "There is the Prophet now!" and they all ran to meet him, and when they beheld him they were greatly amazed, like the people of the old time who saw the face of Moses shining as he came down from Sinai, and running to him, they saluted him. And he asked the ministers, "What is the matter? What is the question which you are so bitterly debating?" And while they sought for words with which to answer him, the father came. "Master," he cried, "I have brought unto thee my son, which hath a dumb spirit; and wheresoever he taketh him he teareth him; and he foameth, and gnasheth with his teeth, and pineth away; and I spake unto thy disciples that they should cast him out; and they could not."

And the Master looked at the disciples, and what he saw in their faces troubled him greatly. For he saw that they were thinking of themselves. We know that, because of two confessions which they made the next day. They confessed that they had been disputing among

themselves which was the greatest. They confessed, also, that they saw a stranger who was doing what they could not do: he was casting out devils. And they stopped him. That is, as the crowd came, the nine said, "Now we will show them what great power we have. We will work a miracle; we will cast out this devil, and amaze them." The thought in their hearts was not one of pity for the father and the boy. They wanted, as we say, to "show off." Not for the lad's sake, and not for the Master's sake, but for their own glory, they purposed to do this deed of healing! We may guess, too, that Andrew said, "I am the one to lay my hands upon him, for I was the first apostle of you all;" and that Philip answered, "No, I am the one, for the Lord himself went in search of me and called me;" and that the others made claims each for himself, saying, "I am the greatest." And the result was that there was no miracle. Neither God nor man responds to that selfish spirit.

Our Lord was greatly grieved. His heart was full of the thought of his coming death,

wherein he would give himself for the good of men; and here were his disciples interested only in themselves. It made him feel his loneliness, in the midst of people who were so far from understanding him. "O faithless generation," he sighed, looking in the faces of the excited apostles, "how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you?" And he turned to the father. "Bring thy son hither." So he brought him, and one of the lad's bad fits came upon him, and he fell upon the ground, rolling over and over, foaming at the mouth. And he asked his father, "How long ago is it since this came unto him?" And he said, "Of a child; and ofttimes it hath cast him into the fire, and into the water, to destroy him: but if thou canst do anything, have compassion on us, and help us." Now that the apostles had failed, the man feared that the Prophet would fail also. But our Lord said to him, "If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth." And straightway the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, "Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbe-

lief." And the Lord said, "Thou dumb and deaf spirit, I charge thee, come out of him, and return no more into him!" And the deaf spirit heard, and the dumb spirit cried out with a loud voice, and the lad lay suddenly still with shut eyes, so that many said, "He is dead." But Jesus took him by the hand and lifted him up, and he arose. And the father and the son went home, hand in hand, praising God and full of gratitude.

VII

THE GOOD SAMARITAN

Over the Jordan lies a land which was called Perea, that is, the land beyond. There our Lord spent the greater part of the remaining months of his life. He went to Jerusalem for a few days at the Feast of Tabernacles, when he healed a man born blind. He was again in the city at the Feast of the Dedication of the Temple. One of these days came in the fall, the other in the winter. Perea was a Jewish district, like Judea and Galilee. In the towns were synagogues and Pharisees.

New disciples now gathered about him, and one day he chose seventy of them and sent them out before him into the cities of Perea, as he had sent the Twelve into the cities of Galilee. So the Seventy went, healing the sick and preaching the Kingdom of God, and people listened to them, especially simple and poor people. The Pharisees despised them, but men and women who lived on farms and

in the back streets of towns received them. At that time Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes." Many of the wise and prudent hated our Lord, as they did in Judea. They thought that they knew all knowledge, and were much displeased when he came teaching things which they had never taught. It hurt their pride.

Sometimes these people asked him questions, hoping that he would not be able to answer them. Once, when a company of them sat about him, a lawyer stood up and said, "Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" This he asked, not because he felt himself in danger of missing life eternal, or because he wished our Lord to help him. He spoke as a lawyer, whose business it is to ask questions. Our Lord answered, "You have the law-books; what do you read there?"

For the law meant more then than it commonly means now. Nobody would think of

looking in a modern law-book to find out how to inherit eternal life. These books are about bargains and mortgages and corporations and crimes. People read them to learn how to keep out of jail. But this lawyer's books were full of religion. Some of them are in the Old Testament. They showed how good and bad actions affect not only the present, but the future life of men. So the lawyer, remembering the words of his books, answered, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself." And Jesus said, "Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live." But the lawyer was not satisfied. Our Lord had answered his question, but that was not what he wanted. So he asked another, hoping that this one would be too hard for him. He said, "And who is my neighbor?" For this, as you remember, was one of the matters of difference between our Lord and the chief people of the Jews. They said that the Jews had no neighbors except such as were of their

own race and religion. They did not call Samaritans, or Gentiles, or publicans, or sinners neighbors; they called them strangers, and had no love towards them whatever. Our Lord replied in a parable.

He told a story about a man who was walking along a very lonely road. There were steep rocks on either side and many sharp corners. Sometimes the way went down so deep among the cliffs that it was almost dark; sometimes it climbed so high upon the hills that the traveler, as he went, could look out over miles and miles. The man did not seem to enjoy the journey. Every little while he stopped and listened. When he came to a corner, he looked very cautiously to see if there were anybody on the other side. Sometimes, when a stone loosened from the rocks came rolling down into the road, he would look up, greatly alarmed, and wonder if somebody's foot had stirred the pebble from its place. For the traveler was afraid of robbers.

The road was called the Red Road, partly because the white rocks through which it ran

had red streaks in them, and partly because of other red streaks which were not in the rocks, but were made by the blood of wounded men. Almost every day robbers would rush out upon some traveler and take away all that he had, leaving him bleeding by the wayside. That is why the man kept such a sharp lookout as he hurried along.

At last, however, in spite of all his looking and listening, down came the wild brigands from behind a rock or around a corner. They caught the poor man, choked him, threw him down and beat him, and after taking all his goods and money, away they went, leaving him lying on the hard rocks, half dead, making the Red Road redder than ever.

By and by there came a priest on his way from Jericho to Jerusalem to take his part in the service of the temple. When he saw this poor man, he did not stop to help him, but turned across to the other side of the road, and went straight along, without looking back. "Dear me," he said, "there have been robbers here, and very lately, too. Perhaps at this very

moment they are dividing their spoil in the thievish corners of the rocks. They may hear my steps. This is a place of peril. Let me get out of it as soon as I can." So on he went, thinking only of himself.

Presently there came another traveler, bound, like the priest, from Jericho to Jerusalem, and on his way to the temple. This man was a Levite, that is, he sang in the choir. The choirman saw at once that something had happened, and he felt as many people feel when there is an accident. He wanted to see how the robber's victim looked. So, instead of going by on the other side, he crossed over and stood beside the wounded man. And the poor man, groaning with pain, looked up and saw the Levite, and said to himself, "Ah! here is a friend who will give me help; he has come to take me up." Then do you know what the singer did? He turned away and left him.

It was as if a company of people were cast away on a desert island, and looking day after day across the ocean, watching for a sail; and one day somebody cries, "A ship! a ship,"

and there is a splendid vessel with flags flying; and they hail the ship, and the captain hears or sees and begins to come in towards the land; and their hearts are filled with joy and they hurry about packing their things, making ready to go home; and then, suddenly, without a word, the ship turns and sails away and presently is out of sight. How disappointed they would be! It would have been better not to have seen the ship at all. It was with such a feeling that the wounded man watched the Levite as he climbed the hill. So the Levite left him. And presently the priest was praying and the Levite was singing in the service, as if they thought that God sees only what takes place in church, and does not know what happens on the road.

At last, there came along a man whom all the Levites and the priests disliked, because he did not go to their church. This man was a Samaritan. He stopped as he saw the wounded traveler, and had compassion on him, and went to him and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine. He lifted him up on his own horse, and walked beside him, supporting

THE GOOD SAMARITAN

him. By and by they came to an inn, and the Samaritan got a place for the man to sleep, and sat up with him all night, nursing him. Then in the morning, when he must go away about his business, he called the landlord and paid the poor man's bill, and put in his hands some money beside that, saying, "Take care of him, and if it costs more, let me know when I come again, and I will pay it." The Samaritan was a stranger both to the man and to the country; he knew also that the man's friends, and probably the man himself, disliked Samaritans. Yet he did all this.

"Now," said our Lord to the questioning lawyer, "which of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbor unto him that fell among the thieves?" And he said, "He that showed mercy on him." Then Jesus said unto him, "Go, and do thou likewise."

VIII

THE PRODIGAL SON

One of the reasons why the King was hated was that he was so kind to those whom the great and rich people, and even the ministers, disliked. The Pharisees and Sadducees felt that Gentiles and Samaritans and publicans and sinners should be avoided. But Jesus felt that it was as bad for good people to keep away from those who were in error or sin, as it would be for the doctors to keep away from the sick. So he went amongst them, and made friends with them, and was able to help them. Almost every day he dined with somebody who had hardly ever had a respectable person under his roof before. He said that God was not in the least like the Pharisees and Sadducees; the ministers and the priests were both mistaken about God.

Once he reminded them that a shepherd who has a hundred sheep will go in search of even one which is lost, and will seek that

sheep for hours and hours through briers and brambles, and when he finds it will be so glad that he will bring in all his friends and neighbors. "And you know," he said, "what a woman does who has ten pieces of silver and loses one, how she takes a candle and a broom, and searches the whole house till she finds it, and when it is found she calls her friends and her neighbors together saying, 'Rejoice with me; for I have found the piece which I had lost.' Likewise, I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth." Then he told the story of the Prodigal Son.

Once upon a time there was a man who had two sons. The elder was quiet and steady, but the younger son was a restless lad who was weary of staying at home, and wished to go and see the world. So the younger went one day to his father and asked for the money which would properly come to him when he was of age. "Father," he said, "give me the portion of goods which falleth to me." And the father, who was a man of wealth, gave to both his sons.

Then the younger took his money, and went a long way off into the midst of the great world, and there had a fine time. He spent his money for this thing and for that, buying what was sweet to eat and sour to drink, and all he thought about was how to have a better time to-morrow. Thus the days went by. Some of the sweets gave him a toothache, and some of the sours gave him a headache, and none of the pleasures lasted long; but he fancied that he was enjoying them all. At last, one morning, he waked to find that he had not a penny in his pocket. All that his father had given him was gone. And then something happened; there arose a mighty famine in that land. Now a famine, as of course you know, is a time when everybody is hungry and there is nothing to eat. There had been no rain. The grain had stopped growing, and the grass had stopped growing, and everything had ceased to grow, except people's appetites — they grew bigger and bigger.

This was exceedingly hard for the lad who

had spent all his money. Moreover, he found that in losing his wealth he had lost his friends also. All the gay young men and women to whom he had given so many gifts and pleasures now turned their backs upon him, and when they saw him in the street, went around the corner to avoid him. For they had been only his money's friends. Indeed, he himself had not been a true friend to them. He had never really cared about anybody but himself. He had never helped another; so now there was none who would help him.

Only one course was open to him, except to starve, and that was to go to work. But even work was hard to find. He did not know enough to do such work as calls for training. In spite of his fine clothes and his soft hands, he could do nothing but what is called unskilled labor. That is the hardest kind and the worst paid. But when there is a famine, business fails, and there are few chances even to get such jobs as that. At last, the only occupation he could find was that of a swineherd.

He had a hard time getting even this place, but he succeeded, and there he was day after day, in sun and rain, tending pigs in the field. And because it was a time of famine, when food was failing even in rich houses, he had to have his dinner with the pigs. Now a bill of fare for a pig's dinner is not a pleasant entertainment for a man, even when the trough is well supplied. Think, then, what it must have been in the midst of a famine. The swine had husks, and the prodigal son had nothing better. The farmer came out with a bucketful of husks and dumped them down upon the ground, and the boy and the pigs fought together for the best pieces.

Then the prodigal thought of home. He could shut his eyes and see how it all looked: the house where he was born, with trees about it; the rooms within, and all the familiar furniture; the table spread for dinner, and his father and mother and elder brother sitting down. Was there a place on one side left for him? Why, even his father's servants had enough and to spare, and he was perishing with hunger.

Finally, he could stand it no longer. He said to himself, "I will go home. I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants." So he filled his pockets with husks, and shut the gate upon the swine, and turned his face towards home.

Now that day his father was looking and looking down the road. I suppose that that had happened many times, for the father was very sad about his son. It had been many months since he had heard from him, and the last news had not been pleasant news. So he watched the road, saying to himself, "Some day he will come back." Away down the street, walking slowly, like one who is weary after a long journey, or like one who is very doubtful if he will be welcome, came a man: probably a tramp, for his clothes were ragged and dirty, and yet with a familiar look. And the father looked again, and behold, it was his son.

What did the father do? Did he say, "There

is my bad son, who has disgraced himself and me. He has spent all his money and is coming back for more. He thinks that I will forgive him, but he will find that he is very much mistaken." Or did he say, "Yes, it is my boy, now, what shall I do? What shall I do? Shall I take him back or not?" No: he rose up instantly, running out of the house and down the road, so that he met his son while the lad was yet a great way from the house. He had compassion, and greeted him, and put his arms around him and kissed him. And the son began to say the words which he had been repeating to himself, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son." But the father brought him in, and called the servants. "Bring forth the best robe," he said, "and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand and shoes on his feet; and bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it, and let us eat, and be merry." So they cooked the very nicest dinner which they knew how to make, and the neighbors were sent for; and after dinner men were

brought in with banjos and violins, and all began to dance.

There was one exception, however, to this merriment. That was the elder brother. He was working in the field, knowing nothing of this great event. When he came home to supper he was much surprised to hear a great noise of talking and laughing, with music and dancing. All the young men and women of the neighborhood seemed to be there, having a beautiful time. The elder brother thought it strange that there should be a party at his house, and he not be invited. So he called one of the servants and asked what these things meant. And the servant said, "Thy brother is come; and thy father hath killed the fatted calf, because he hath received him safe and sound." But he was angry, and would not go in. "My brother has been a fool," he said to himself, "and bad besides. Now he comes home and my father takes him in and makes much of him. My brother ought to have a whipping instead of a supper."

Then the father left the guests and the

dancing, and came out and spoke to his discontented son. And the son answering, said to his father, "Lo, these many years have I stayed quietly at home, and minded your business and my own, working early and late upon the farm, and never disobeying you. And you have never given any party for me. You have never made a supper that I might be merry with my friends. And now your son has come, who has wasted your money in rioting and drunkenness, and you are giving him the best you have." But the father said, "Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine. It was meet that we should make merry and be glad; for this thy brother was dead and is alive again; and was lost, and is found." Even then, I fear that the elder son did not have a cheerful face, nor did he kiss his brother when he met him.

Our Lord meant that the Gentiles, the Samaritans, the publicans, and the sinners were like the prodigal son, and the Pharisees and Sadducees were like the elder brother; but God is like the compassionate and loving and forgiving father.

IX

THE RICH MAN AND THE BEGGAR

Most of our Lord's disciples were poor people. The rich were not much interested in the things which chiefly interested him. They were giving their attention to their business and their pleasure, making money and spending it. Moreover, they were quite satisfied with the world as it was, living comfortably in their pleasant houses, and dreading any change. There was still another reason why the rich did not join him. Not only were they intent upon this present life and satisfied with it, but many of them were selfish. Jesus taught that all persons should share their possessions with others. He said that if a man had two coats, he ought to give one to his neighbor who had none. But the people who had two coats did not like that, and those who had twenty coats were very angry about it.

It must be confessed that our Lord did not make it easy for the rich. One day a young

man came, desiring to be one of his disciples, and the young man had great possessions. Everybody was surprised to see him, for it was as if a millionaire should propose to become a member of the Salvation Army. The man came running, filled with enthusiasm, and kneeled before our Lord, saying, "Good Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" The lawyer had asked the same question, but the young millionaire asked it in an altogether different spirit. He was deeply in earnest. Jesus said, "Thou knowest the commandments, Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Honor thy father and thy mother." "Yes," answered the rich young man, "all these have I kept from my youth up." For he was as good as he was rich. Our Lord looked upon him in his youth and strength and ardor, and loved him. "All this," said the man, "have I done: what lack I yet?" And the Lord said, "Yet lackest thou one thing: sell all that thou hast and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, follow me." You see how hard it was. Our

JESUS AND THE RICH YOUNG MAN

Lord did not say that to other rich men; he said it to this rich man because it was exactly what he needed. The man had never done anything bad, but, on the other hand, he had never done anything good. He had lived a perfectly proper, but a very selfish life. His only way was to break with it all, to give it all up, and come out into a totally different manner of living. But the young man rose slowly from his knees, with a long face, and turned about and went away. He felt that that was too much.

It was at that time that our Lord said, "How hard it is for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God! It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God." Not because it is wrong to be rich, nor because God likes the poor better than the rich, but because the rich are so tempted to be satisfied and selfish. One time he told a story about a rich man, and what happened after he was dead.

There were two men who were near neigh-

bors, but in a strange way. One lived in a fine house, the other lived on the sidewalk by the gate. One was a rich man, the other was a beggar. The rich man was splendidly dressed in silks and velvets, in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day. He had servants to wait upon him, and every day at breakfast and luncheon and dinner they brought him all manner of pleasant things to eat and to drink in vessels of gold and silver.

But the beggar had what was worse than nothing. It was not his fault that he was poor. Some people are poor because they are lazy, but this man was sick. His body was covered with sores. As weeks went by and he got no better, his friends felt that something must be done. Either they were so poor themselves that they could not take care of him, or else they were tired of nursing him. So one night they took him up, and carried him out, and put him down at the gate of the richest man in town. "Now," they said, "let us see; perhaps the rich man will be good to him." But there he lay, and the rich man paid no atten-

tion to him. He was so weak that he could not even keep the dogs off. The street dogs came, growling and yelping, and thrust their noses into his face and licked his sores. Some persons who passed by put money into his hand. But that did little good; what he needed was not a dime, but a doctor; he should have been taken to a hospital. Sometimes fine carriages stopped beside him at the gate, and beautiful ladies got out, taking care that their gay gowns should not brush against the beggar, and went into the house, and he could look through the lighted windows and see them sitting at dinner, while musicians played. And he wished that he had even the crumbs which fell upon the floor.

There is one visitor, however, who comes sooner or later to everybody, entering all gates, and knocking at all doors. None is so rich and none so poor but this visitor takes him by the hand. The visitor is death. So death came in due time to the rich man and to the beggar. First the beggar died, and the angels came and carried him away from all his hun-

ger and pain into the blessed paradise above. And in paradise was a great feast, and Abraham, the father of the faithful, was at the head of the table. And do you know what they did with the beggar? They brought him in and gave him the place of honor. There he sat at Abraham's right hand. Or rather, there he lay, for that was then the fashion. They had couches instead of chairs, and the guests leaned on their left elbows. There was the beggar, then, in Abraham's bosom; that is, reclining next to Abraham.

Then the rich man died, and was buried. They had a stately funeral for him, with a long procession of mourners. The minister praised him in a sermon, and people said how much he would be missed, and what good dinners he gave, and what disposition he had made of his money. And nobody doubted for a moment but that he had gone to heaven. Some people wondered a little if he would be satisfied with Abraham's table, having always dined so well himself, but they were all sure that he was in the same good society in heaven

as that which he had so adorned on earth. This, however, was a sad mistake. When the rich man opened his eyes after the sleep of death, he was in a place of torment, flames were burning all about him. He who had been rich was now miserably poor; all his treasure had been put in a bank in the town where he had lived, none of it had been laid up in heaven. He was in great pain. Among his other distresses, he was dreadfully thirsty, and not a drop of water was in reach. But across a deep ravine was a place of pleasure, cool and shadowy, with the wind blowing across it, and sweet rivers flowing down delectable mountains between flowery fields. And there was Abraham, and with him all the blessed saints at dinner. And next to Abraham, between him and Isaac, with Jacob and Joseph across the table — yes, there was the beggar who used to lie beside the rich man's gate.

The rich man had never driven the beggar from his gate. He had even given him a small coin now and then, and had let the servants feed him. Once in a while he had spoken to

him. He knew that his name was Lazarus. And now the rich man cried and said, "Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, for I am tormented in this flame." That was not much to ask: though the rich man did not quite realize how all had changed, he being now a beggar, while Lazarus was an honored guest at Abraham's table. But Abraham said, "Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented. And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence."

The judgment of God may be very different from the judgment of men: that is what our Lord meant. Some who seem to be rich are, in God's sight, poor and miserable, all their wealth being perishable, so that they cannot take it with them when they die; while some

poor persons, like our Lord's poor disciples, may be rich in the best treasures, and be counted among the chief citizens of heaven. Good society, according to our Lord, is not determined by clothes, or bank-books, or birth, or manners, but by simple goodness.

Then the rich man remembered his five brothers. He had never done much for any one who was poorer than himself, but he was a good friend to his own companions, and especially to his own family. "I pray thee, father," he cried, "that thou wouldest send Lazarus to my father's house; for I have five brethren; that he may testify to them, lest they also come to this place of torment." He imagined his brothers, sitting at dinner in their beautiful dining-room, thinking of nothing but the pleasures of this life, and so making ready to enter into pain in the next life; and in comes Lazarus, straight out of the grave, with a message from heaven; and the five brothers rise up in great terror, and listen to his words, and thereafter live quite differently, sharing their wealth with the poor. But Abra-

ham answered, "They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them." As if he had said, "There is a church around the corner from their house, and ministers are holding services and reading the Bible and preaching there every sabbath day. The ministers are bringing messages from heaven, and warning people not to have all their treasure here below." "Nay, father Abraham," replied the rich man, "but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent." But Abraham answered, "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, if they mind not what is said in church and written in the Bible, nothing will help them. They will not be persuaded, though one rose from the dead."

X

AT THE GRAVE OF LAZARUS

THERE was another Lazarus beside the one who lay a beggar at the rich man's gate, and then sat next to Abraham at the table in paradise. This other Lazarus, as you will remember, was a dear friend of our Lord. He lived a little out of Jerusalem, at Bethany, and was a man of wealth. His two sisters, Mary and Martha, lived with him. They were so rich that one time when Mary wished to do our Lord a special honor, and to show him her reverence and love, she took an alabaster box of very precious ointment and broke the box and poured the ointment on his head as he sat at dinner: and the apostles who were at the table whispered among themselves that the box and the ointment together must have cost at least three hundred dollars.

Our Lord loved Mary and Martha and Lazarus, and probably stayed with them whenever he visited Jerusalem. At first they treated him

with much ceremony, and made him a great supper. But he did not like that. One time Martha was very busy preparing for this feast, bustling about and seeing to this and to that, while Mary sat quietly at our Lord's feet listening as he talked. By and by, Martha came in and complained that Mary left her to do all the work: to which our Lord replied, "Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things; but one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part which shall not be taken away from her." That is, he cared much more for talking than he did for eating. It is likely that after that they received him very simply as one of the family. So he came in and went out, as if their house were his own home.

But now, while our Lord was in Perea, telling about the good Samaritan, and the Prodigal Son, and the Rich Man and the Beggar, Lazarus fell sick. His sisters at once sent word of this illness to our Lord. The messenger came and brought the bad news, saying, as he had been taught, "Lord, he whom thou lovest is sick." But Jesus did not go. He abode two days still

in the same place where he was. The sisters waited and the disciples wondered. They all knew that he loved Lazarus. They knew also that Lazarus was every day getting worse and worse. But still he stayed. The message of the anxious sisters was like the prayers which many people pray to God in great distress, and God seems not to answer.

After two days, however, he said to his disciples, "Let us go into Judea again." They answered, "Master, the Jews of late sought to stone thee; and goest thou thither again?" For, the last time he was in Jerusalem, at the Feast of the Dedication, in the winter, he had barely escaped alive. They had wondered that he did not go when the word came from Bethany, for it did not seem like him to be afraid: but now that he determined to go, their hearts sank within them. "I have my work to do," he said. "Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep." "Lord," they answered, not quite knowing what he meant, "if he sleeps, he shall do well." But Jesus was speaking of the sleep from which the sleeper

does not wake again in this world, and he said plainly, "Lazarus is dead. And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, to the intent ye may believe; nevertheless, let us go unto him." Then were the disciples in deep despair, and Thomas said to the others, "Let us also go, that we may die with him."

Meanwhile it had come to pass even as Jesus had said. Lazarus had died, and, according to their custom, on the same day they had buried him. When Jesus came, he found that he had lain in the grave four days already. Somebody told him that as he came near the town; and at the same time somebody hurried to the house and found Martha, and told her that their friend was coming. The house was full of people, and was in great disorder, all the chairs and tables being upset, as was their way at a time of mourning. The messenger found Martha busy here and there, but Mary was in her own room with the door fast shut. So Martha went and met our Lord; but Mary sat still in the house. And Martha said, "Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother

had not died. But I know, that even now, whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give it thee." Jesus answered, "Thy brother shall rise again." Martha said, "I know that he shall rise again — in the resurrection at the last day." Jesus said unto her, "I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?" She did not in the least understand it. She listened as people listen to-day, with tears in their eyes, when the words are read at the beginning of the burial service. But she said, "Yes, Lord; I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world." For these dear friends at Bethany knew in a dim way, like the Twelve, that Jesus was the King of Glory. Our Lord said, "Where is Mary?"

Then Martha, leaving Jesus where he was, outside the town, went back and found her sister, and whispered to her, saying, "The Master is come, and calleth for thee." As soon as Mary heard that, she arose quickly

and came unto him. And the mourners, seeing her go out, said, "She goeth to the grave to weep there;" and they followed her. Then, when Mary was come where Jesus was, and saw him, she fell down at his feet, saying unto him, "Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died." Mary and Martha had said that over and over to each other during the past four days. So Mary lay at the feet of Jesus weeping, and the friends who came with her were weeping also. And our Lord was very sorry, knowing indeed that he would presently change tears into smiles, but entering into their deep grief. This he did that he might be able to help them. They on their part must have faith, he on his part must have sympathy. He groaned and was troubled. He said, "Where have ye laid him?" They answered, "Lord, come and see." And as they went, weeping, and Jesus weeping with them, some said, "Behold how he loved him;" and others said, "Could not this man, which opened the eyes of the blind, have caused that even this man should not have died?"

Jesus, therefore, again groaning in himself, came to the grave. It was a cave, and a stone lay against the mouth of it. "Take away the stone," he said. But Martha, who, as we have seen, was a plain-spoken, practical person, said, "Lord, shall we do that? Remember, he has been dead four days." To whom our Lord replied, "Said I not unto thee that if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God?" Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead was laid.

And Jesus stood and prayed. "Father," he said, lifting up his eyes, "I thank thee that thou hast heard me. And I know that thou hearest me always; but because of the people which stand by I said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me." And when he had thus spoken, he cried with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come forth." And he came forth. He that was dead rose up and came forth, bound hand and foot with grave-clothes; and his face was bound about with a napkin. There they stood, — the sisters, the apostles, and the people of Bethany, — and saw that

sight. And Jesus said, "Loose him, and let him go."

Then a thing happened which was almost as strange as that. Some of the company, instead of being filled with joy and wonder, were filled with fear and anger. They beheld their neighbor come to life again, but what they thought of most was that now the Prophet of Nazareth would gain more disciples. He whom the chief people so hated would be more powerful than ever. And these men went straight from the empty grave to the Pharisees in Jerusalem, and told them what our Lord had done, and the Pharisees told it to the Sadducees, and the Pharisees and the Sadducees together held a council saying, "What shall we do? for this man doeth many miracles. If we let him thus alone, all men will believe on him; and the Romans shall come and take away our place and nation." And the high priest, Caiaphas, spoke and said, "It is better that one man should die than that the whole nation perish." Then from that day forth they took counsel together to put him to death. Thus was ful-

filled the saying of our Lord that they who do not hear the voice of God in the Bible and in daiiy life will not be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.

Jesus had brought a dead man back to life, and many believed on him, but therefore the priests and the ministers would kill him. The priests and the ministers and the people of the church were thinking of themselves : even the prayers which they prayed were selfish prayers. "The Prophet of Nazareth," they said, "if he comes into power, will turn us out. His ways are not as our ways, neither his thoughts as our thoughts. We must put an end to his influence by putting an end to his life." They had said such things before in private. Now they said them aloud in public.

Meanwhile, Lazarus was alive and well. He never told what he heard and saw while he lay four days dead ; or, if he did, we do not know what it was. Robert Browning wrote a poem in which he imagined an Arab physician visiting Lazarus. It was a good while after the day of the opened tomb, and the physician asked

him about it, and heard him tell the story. He said that Lazarus was the most singular man he had ever met. The things which interested or troubled most men, such as the march of an invading army, did not affect him: while some slight wrong word or act of a child at play would put him in great fear, more than if the child showed symptoms of a fever. And if somebody said, "Why, that is such a little thing," he would look at him in surprise, as if one were to hold a lighted match over a barrel of gunpowder, and say, "Why, it is such a little blaze."

Perhaps we would judge of things in the same way if we had spent four days in the other world.

XI

ON THE WAY TO JERUSALEM

The raising of Lazarus made so much excitement that our Lord felt obliged to go away. He knew of the determination of the Pharisees and Sadducees to kill him: but his hour was not yet come. He retired, therefore, to a place called Ephraim, among the northern hills of Judea, on the borders of a rocky wilderness. There he stayed with his apostles, preparing himself and them for the final and fatal visit to Jerusalem.

Winter was now over, and spring had come. All the trees were green with tender leaves, and flowers were growing by the side of all the little brooks. It was the season of the Feast of the Passover, and for this feast our Lord was waiting. He knew that Jerusalem would be full of people. They would come from all the land, from Judea, and from Galilee, and from Perea, from the towns in which he had spoken his blessed words of wisdom and had done his gracious works of wonder. At that day, in that

city, the whole nation would be represented. Then and there, accordingly, the King would come. The King of Glory had now made it plain what kind of a kingdom he proposed to establish, and he would present himself to his people that he might be accepted or rejected.

He foresaw how it would be. He told a story once about a man who planted a vineyard, and let it forth to husbandmen, and went into a far country for a long time: and at the season, he sent a servant to the husbandmen that they should give him of the fruit of the vineyard; but the husbandmen beat him and sent him away empty. And again he sent another servant; and they beat him also, and treated him shamefully and sent him away empty. Again he sent a third, and they wounded him also, and cast him out. Then said the lord of the vineyard, "What shall I do? I will send my beloved son; it may be they will reverence him when they see him." But when the husbandmen saw him, they reasoned among themselves, saying, "This is the heir: come, let us kill him, that the inheritance may be ours." So they cast

him out of the vineyard, and killed him. You see what he meant. The planter was God, the husbandmen were the Jews, the servants were the prophets who had come with messages from God and had been stoned, the son was the Son of God. Jesus knew that they would do to him what the wicked husbandmen did to the lord's son in the story.

But the day came, and he started on his last journey. He steadfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem. He walked before along the road, and the apostles walked behind; and they were amazed to see him. On he went as a hero advances into battle. They had never seen him look like that before. "It cannot be," they said one to another, "that he is going to defeat. He would not walk with such a step as that towards death." And they began to lift up their hearts, thinking that in Jerusalem they might find a crown and not a cross. But he turned about and spoke to them in the old way, saying the old words, repeating what he said that day when they had all recognized him as the King of Glory. "Be-

hold," he said, "we go up to Jerusalem, and all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of man shall be accomplished. For he shall be delivered unto the Gentiles, and shall be mocked, and spitefully entreated, and spitted on; and they shall scourge him, and put him to death; and the third day he shall rise again." But even now they did not understand.

Indeed, so far were they from understanding, that two of the apostles, James and John, made now a strange request. Their mother was in the company, with Mary Magdalen, out of whom our Lord had cast seven devils, and other good women, who ministered to our Lord and to the Twelve; and the two brothers, being perhaps ashamed to go themselves, persuaded the mother to ask the King for the best places in his kingdom, one for James and one for John. "Grant," she said, "that these my two sons may sit, one on thy right hand, and the other on the left, in thy kingdom." They still thought that the King of Glory would be the ruler of Jerusalem, that he would have a

court and a palace, and would sit upon a throne of gold. The two fishermen wished to sit on gold thrones also. The ten were much displeased when they heard of this request of the two, for they, on their side, had a mind to occupy high seats in the new kingdom. But our Lord called them all together, and taught them the true meaning of greatness. "Whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant. For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many." Greatness, he said, does not consist in having many servants, but in being, one's own self, the servant of many people.

One day, on this journey to Jerusalem, mothers came bringing young children to him that he should touch them, and his apostles rebuked those who brought them. The apostles were altogether too active in keeping people away from our Lord; as, indeed, many of their successors have been. But when Jesus saw it, he was much displeased. He said, "Suffer the little children to come unto me,

and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein." The little children, simple and natural and affectionate and truthful, had the spirit which the Sadducees and Pharisees so sadly lacked. And he took the little ones in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them.

Another day, as he entered into a certain village, there met him ten men who had a grievous sickness. They were lepers. They had a disease which begins with a little sore spot on the skin, and keeps on spreading till the leper is worse than dead. People said that it was like sin, which begins with some small, wrong act, or even thought, and unless it is stopped, grows on and on into dreadful disaster to both soul and body. And because it was a symbol of sin, and also because it was catching, the leper had to live apart from other people. When he went along the road, he must cry "Unclean! unclean!" so that whoever was coming might take warning and get out of the way.

Ten of these poor men, brothers in misery, met our Lord as he came to the first house of this little village. They stood afar off, not venturing near, and lifted up their weak voices and cried altogether, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us." For they had heard that he was kind, even to lepers. And when he saw them, he said, "Go show yourselves unto the priests." For the priests were the Board of Health. The rule was that if any leper felt that he was cured, he must go to the priests in the temple and let them examine him that they might make sure of his condition, whether he was really well or not. So our Lord said, "Go show yourselves unto the priests."

But the men were still lepers. They were not in the least cured. Why, then, should they go to the priests? If they had been like some people, they would not have gone a step. Sometimes even small children, when they are told by their parents to do this or that, say, "Why? What for?" But the lepers asked no questions. Straight they started, fast as they could go on their feeble legs, to find the priests in

their office in the temple. And as they went, they were cleansed. Step by step, as they made their way along the Jerusalem road, their pains were eased, their sores were healed, and their skin began to grow like the skin of a little child, and they were well. By doing what the Lord had said, setting their faces in the right direction and keeping on, they were cleansed. So that here also their leprosy was like sin, which is overcome more and more by every good deed that the sinner does.

They were cleansed then; should they go on or turn back? Nine of them went on. That was what they were told to do, and they did it. They went to the priests and showed themselves, and the priests pronounced them cured, and they returned to their homes. No doubt their hearts were full of gratitude as they were full of joy. But they said nothing. Of the ten, only one turned back. One of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, and with a loud voice glorified God, and fell down on his face at our Lord's feet, giving him thanks. And he was a Samaritan; he was one of those

whom the priests and the ministers despised. And Jesus said, "Were there not ten cleansed? but where are the nine? They are not found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger." And he said unto him, "Arise, go thy way: thy faith hath made thee whole."

XII

IN THE STREETS OF JERICHO

THE way to Jerusalem lay through Jericho. The city stood in the valley of the Jordan, between the river and the hills, in the midst of palm-trees, and was great and beautiful. It was a place of business, being a station on an important road, and had a custom-house where publicans took the toll and made merchants pay a fee for carrying their goods across the border. And chief among the publicans was a man named Zacchæus, whose office had made him rich; but the riches of Zacchæus had not made him respected. The publicans were everywhere hated by the Jews, because they were in the service of the Romans. The taxes which were paid at the custom-house were not spent, like our taxes, for roads and school-houses, but were sent to Rome to increase the wealth of Roman nobles. Accordingly, Zacchæus, while he was one of the richest citizens of Jericho, was one of the most unpopular.

None of the nice people, as we say, would associate with him.

When the news came to Jericho that the Prophet of Nazareth would pass that way on his journey to Jerusalem, even Zacchæus heard it. All the people were interested in his coming, but nobody was more interested than the publican. He had heard that there was a publican among our Lord's twelve friends. There was a great crowd, however, in the streets of Jericho. The season of the Passover was every day bringing companies of pilgrims through the city on their way up the Red Road to the feast. When our Lord came, many came with him, especially from Galilee. For, in spite of the Pharisees, there were still good men in Galilee, who believed in him with all their hearts. Indeed, there were so many following him to Jerusalem that it seemed a little like an invasion. People whispered one to another — First Citizen and Second Citizen putting their heads together — that he was on his way at the head of his disciples to make himself a king, to meet the Pharisees and Sadducees who

had threatened his life, and to drive them from their seats of power. All the more on that account were the men of Jericho desirous to see him. So the street which ran through the heart of the busy town was filled with a great multitude; all the windows were open, and heads were thrust out, watching for him.

But Zacchæus was little of stature. Go where he would along the main street, there was always some large, tall person between him and the middle of the road. He could not see. Any boy knows what he himself would have done in such a case; and Zacchæus, man as he was, did just that thing. He ran along before the procession and climbed up into a tree. Then they came, the Lord, and the Twelve, and the pilgrims from Galilee. It was not much of a procession, for a boy. There was not a uniform, or a flag, or an instrument of music from its beginning to its end. All that the boys saw was a line of dusty men, in the dress of farmers and fisher-folk, looking very tired after a long journey. But the publican saw more than that. In the midst walked

the Master, the Prophet of Nazareth, the friend of publicans. Zacchæus looked at him with all his eyes, and with his heart also.

The Lord, too, was looking about him as he walked. He did not care for crowds, nor for applause; he was never thinking of himself; he was always watching for an opportunity to do good to somebody. And as he went, he heard men hooting and calling names, and pointing their fingers at somebody who was standing in a tree. The crowd had discovered the publican, and were making use of the occasion to tell him what they thought of him. "Who is that?" asked the Master. "Who is that whom the people hate?" And one said, "That is Zacchæus, the publican, the most unpopular man in town." So the Master came to the tree, and when he saw the publican, he spoke to him. "Zacchæus," he said, "make haste and come down; for to-day I must abide at thy house." And he made haste, and came down, and received him joyfully. And the crowd stood in amazement. Then they went together around the corner of the street, the

Prophet whom they had all come out to see, and Zacchæus. And they all murmured. They said hard words beneath their breath. They went home and told their wives, growing more angry the more they thought about it. "He was gone," they said, raising their hands in horror, "to be guest with a man that is a sinner."

Indeed, it was a strange matter: the Archbishop of Canterbury comes to town, and, leaving the procession of the mayor and the clergy and the chief citizens, takes the hand of a notorious gambler and goes with him to dinner. What blank and black looks! For nobody could dislike a gambler more than the people of Jericho disliked a publican.

So they went into the house, and Zacchæus stood and said unto the Lord, "Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken anything from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold." Up to that moment Zacchæus had never given a penny to the poor; never had he restored a dollar to any man from whom he had extorted

more than his due. The hatred of the church people had but hardened the publican's heart. But the courtesy of our Lord melted it in a moment. And Jesus said, "This day is salvation come to this house, forasmuch as he also is a son of Abraham." The sons of the father of the faithful, and members of the household of God, are to be found in unexpected places. "For the Son of man," he added, "is come to seek and to save that which was lost." The Lord, when he looked up into the tree, saw a man who was lost, and he left everything and went and found him.

The next day, as he went out of Jericho with his disciples and a great number of people, a blind man, named Bartimæus, sat by the wayside begging. The crowd came, and the blind beggar heard the noise of their feet and the sound of their voices, and as they came he plucked the cloak of the nearest man and said, "What is it all about?" And the man said, "Jesus of Nazareth passeth by." The beggar knew who that was. He had listened to the talk of the town. The talk of the town was full of

criticism of Jesus, but that did not affect the beggar. He was so poor that he could have his own opinions; he had nothing to lose. People speak of being independently rich, but Bartimæus was independently poor. When they told him that the Prophet of Nazareth had gone to dinner with a sinner, the beggar was much pleased. He was well acquainted with sinners, and knew that many of them are better than they seem.

So, when the man in the crowd said, "Jesus of Nazareth passeth by," Bartimæus began to cry out, and say, "Jesus, thou son of David, have mercy on me." And many charged him that he should hold his peace. They told him in good plain Hebrew to be still. But he cried the more a great deal, "Thou son of David, have mercy on me." And Jesus stood still at the sound of this loud voice, and commanded him to be called. And men, seeing that the Master would befriend the blind man, changed their manner, and spoke kindly to him, saying, "Be of good comfort, rise; he calleth thee."

Now it was early in the morning, and there was a chill in the air, for the spring was young, and the beggar had a long cloak wrapped about him. This he cast away, and came to Jesus. And Jesus said, "What wilt thou that I should do unto thee?" The blind man said unto him, "Lord, that I may receive my sight." And Jesus answered, "Go thy way; thy faith hath made thee whole." And immediately he received his sight, and followed Jesus in the way.

V

How the King came to Jerusalem, and was betrayed and condemned and put to Death upon the Cross; and how he rose again from the Dead and ascended into Heaven.

I

PALMS AND PSALMS

On they came, then, our Lord and the Twelve, and the pilgrims from Galilee, out of the gates of Jericho, up the Red Road, on the way to Jerusalem. At noon they rested in the shadow of the great rocks: at night they came to Bethany. The little town was already full of people who had come to the Feast of the Passover. Some of them slept in tents, some in the fields, some in the houses of friends. Our Lord stayed with Lazarus. The next day was the sabbath, and that evening they made him a supper in the house of a Pharisee named Simon, who had been a leper. For not all the Pharisees were enemies. Lazarus sat at the table, and Martha served. That was the time when Mary broke the alabaster box of precious ointment. She broke the box, and poured the ointment on our Lord's head.

Some of the guests did not like that, perhaps because they felt that our Lord would not

like it: he was always so plain and simple, and seemed not to care to have things done for him. So one said, thinking he was speaking our Lord's thought, "Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred dollars, and given to the poor?" The speaker had also another and worse reason for saying what he did. He was the treasurer of the Twelve. All their money was kept in one bag, and he carried the bag. It was never very heavy: partly because so little was put into it, partly because so much was taken out whenever they found anybody in need, and partly — some of them were beginning to suspect — because the treasurer took what did not belong to him; he took money out of the bag and put it in his own pocket. The treasurer's name was Judas Iscariot. But our Lord said that Mary had done right, and added, — looking forward to the cross, — "She has anointed me for my burial."

Then came the day which we call Sunday, and that morning, at the service in the temple, people were saying one to another, "Will the

Prophet come? What do you think, will he come to the feast?" Some answered, "No, the rulers have determined to kill him; he will keep himself out of their reach." But others answered, "Yes, he has come already. Last night he slept at Bethany, and to-day he will be seen here in the city." "What is that?" men cried. "Is he indeed coming? Let us go out to meet him." Accordingly many people went out from Jerusalem, singing as they went, and having in their hands branches of palms which they waved as the wind waves the tops of the trees.

Meanwhile, our Lord was making his preparations at Bethany. It had been written, centuries before, in the Old Testament, that when the King came he would come sitting on an ass's colt: "Fear not, daughter of Sion, behold, thy King cometh, sitting on an ass's colt." In that country the horse was used in war, the ass was used in peace. So our Lord sent two disciples to the next village, where a man lived whom he knew. "There," he said, "at the corner of the street, you will find a

colt tied by the door; loose him, and bring him to me." And they found, as he had said, and untied the colt; and the man who owned the beast looked out and said, "What are you doing with my colt?" and they answered, as our Lord had taught them, "The Master needs him." So the owner knew that they had come from his friend the Prophet of Nazareth, as had been arranged.

They brought the colt, and cast their long cloaks over his back for a saddle, and seated our Lord thereon, and started for the city. There was a great company of people following, and presently they met the multitude who were coming from Jerusalem, who turned about so that Jesus was in the midst. And they threw their garments in the road that he might ride over them, and tore down branches from the trees and spread them in the way, and sang psalms: "Hosanna: blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord: Hosanna in the highest." And the whole multitude of the disciples rejoiced with great joy, and praised God with a loud voice for all the mighty works

that they had seen. One cried, "He healed the sick in our town. They were brought to him on beds and went away walking and leaping." Another cried, "I was dumb, and he made me speak." And another, "I was a leper, and he made me clean." And others, "We stood by when Lazarus came out of the grave." The loudest voice of all was that of Bartimæus, crying, "I was blind and he gave me sight." Thus they went, laughing and crying, shouting and singing, and Jesus riding in the midst; till some of the Pharisees said, "This is too much. Master, rebuke thy disciples." And he answered, "I tell you that, if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out."

In this manner the King came towards his own city. Even now he wore no crown, and had no royal robe upon his shoulders: he was very different from other kings. Nevertheless he came as a king, to see at last whether they would accept him or reject him. Even on the way, in the midst of the palms and the psalms, his heart sank within him. He felt that the Phar-

isees, with their cold looks, represented most of the people. It was indeed possible that the city might give him a loyal greeting, but not likely. They came to a place in the road where the way rounds a corner of the mountain, and Jerusalem came suddenly into view across a deep ravine. There it lay, the holy city, on its splendid hills, with its great buildings, and, crowning all, the stately temple with its shining roofs. Then the King stopped, and tears came into his eyes, and he cried, with a bitter lamentation, "If thou hadst known, even thou at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes."

And so it was. It seemed for a moment as if all the world had gone after him; the city was moved at his entrance; but the movement was one of curiosity. Few people had any idea what the procession meant. They saw a crowd of farmers from Galilee, and one riding amongst them, and they said, "Who is this?" and the farmers answered, "This is Jesus, the Prophet of Nazareth of Galilee." But the city folk thought little of the people who lived in the

country. They paid no more attention. And in a little while the men with the palm branches were lost in the general crowd which filled the streets.

The disowned King went into the temple, and there looked about, sadly and sternly, and then returned alone, or with only the Twelve beside him, to spend the night at Bethany.

II

THREE DAYS OF THE HOLY WEEK

On Monday, coming from Bethany down the Mount of Olives to Jerusalem, Jesus saw a fig-tree full of leaves, and turned aside to gather some of the fruit; but not a fig was to be found upon it; there was nothing but leaves. It was like the Pharisees and Sadducees, who seemed to be so good, with their splendid temple and their many synagogues, and all their services and their interest in the church, but were not so good as they seemed. And our Lord said, "Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward for ever." So they went on into the city.

Our Lord entered into the temple, and there looked again upon the sights which he had observed the day before with such sad and stern eyes. For the temple stood, as you remember, in a great yard which was paved with stone and had a stone wall about it. This yard was called the Court of the Gentiles, because

the Gentiles were free to go into it if they chose, though they were not allowed to pass the gate of the temple itself. It had been intended that this court should be a holy place for strangers. It was hoped that men who were not Jews might enter and remember God and pray to him.

But nobody was praying there that day. The Feast of the Passover, with its multitudes of worshiping pilgrims, had of course increased the number of the sacrifices. Everybody who came to the holy city would wish to offer a sacrifice on the altar in the temple. And in order to accommodate these pilgrims, so that they might get the oxen, the sheep, and the doves which they must bring to the priests, a market was opened in the Gentile court. Indeed, it was much more like a county fair than like a church. There were stalls for sheep and oxen, and cages for doves, and men were buying and selling. There were tables at which money-changers sat to trade small coins for large ones, and to exchange foreign money for Jewish. And those who bought and those

who sold were making a great noise, filling the air with shouts and cries. Thus prayer was made impossible.

This our Lord had observed the day before. Now, when he came back, he had a whip in his hand, — a scourge of small cords. And presently there was a great commotion in the place. They who were coming in at the gates met sheep and oxen rushing out, and behind the sheep and oxen was our Lord. He overturned the tables of the money-changers, and the seats of those who sold doves, crying, "Take these things hence." "Is it not written," he said, "'My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations?' but ye have made it a den of thieves." He would not even allow men to carry bundles across the yard. He stopped whatever interfered with prayer. There he stood, in the name of God, rebuking the traders and the priests. Thus for the second time our Lord presented himself as the leader of the people. This time, many were impressed, and a company of choir boys, coming out of the temple, began to sing verses of psalms

which had been sung the day before on the way from Bethany, — "Hosanna to the Son of David."

On Tuesday, coming again to Jerusalem, our Lord and the Twelve passed the barren fig-tree, and behold, it was withered away. When he was come into the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came to him and said, "By what authority doest thou these things? and who gave thee this authority?" But they dared not lay hands upon him, for now many of the people were on his side, taking him for a prophet. So all that day he taught in the temple, and the Pharisees and the Sadducees disputed with him, asking him hard questions, trying to entangle him in his talk, hoping that he might say something which they could use against him. But he put them all to silence.

As the sun was setting he went away with his disciples, knowing that it would not be safe to stay in the city after dark. And they sat down outside the walls, on the rocks of the Mount of Olives. The sun as it went down

shone upon the city and the temple, so that the disciples were amazed at the strength and beauty of the place. "Master," they cried, "see what manner of stones and what buildings are here!" But he answered, "Seest thou these great buildings? there shall not be left one stone upon another that shall not be thrown down." And he told them how the splendid city should be destroyed, and how at a time which no man knew, not even he himself, even the wide world should come to an end, and how he would return to be the judge of all men.

On one of these three days, as he went away, he took his leave of Jerusalem, as he had before taken his leave of Chorazin and Bethsaida and Capernaum, saying, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!"

On Wednesday, the fear and anger of the chief priests and the scribes and the elders of

the people came to such a pass that they held a meeting in the palace of the high priest, Caiaphas, and consulted that they might take Jesus and kill him. But they decided that they must wait till the feast was over, and the pilgrims were gone home. They did not dare to take him publicly, on account of the people. As they were still debating, however, there was a knock at the door, and somebody came back with strange news. "There is a man here who says that he is one of the disciples of the prophet. Shall we let him in?" "Yes," they said, "admit him." And in came one of the Twelve, the dishonest treasurer, Judas Iscariot. And Judas said, "What will ye give me, and I will deliver him unto you? I will lead you to a place where you may seize him quietly, and take him. What will you pay me?" And they promised to give him thirty pieces of silver. So he went out of the meeting of the clergy, leaving them very glad, and shut the priest's door behind him, and walked again beside our Lord.

III

PHARISEES AND SADDUCEES AND WEDDING GUESTS

On one of these three days our Lord told the Pharisees and Sadducees that they were like the guests whom a king invited to a wedding.

Once, he said, there was a king whose son was to be married. The king had planned to celebrate this glad event by giving a splendid dinner, and had sent out many invitations. All the chief people of the land had been bidden to the wedding. So the day came, and the king sent forth his servants to say to them that were bidden, "Come; for all things are now ready." But they would not come. The servants came back, and there was no one with them.

This was so strange a thing, — for most persons will think twice before they decline an invitation to a royal wedding, — that the king said to himself, "There is some misunderstanding. The servants must have made

a mistake. Perhaps they did not make it plain that this is the day." So he sent other servants, saying, "Tell them which are bidden, 'Behold, I have prepared my dinner; my oxen and my fatlings are killed, and all things are ready; come unto the marriage.'" It must have been a great banquet; they had roasted several oxen, and fatlings besides. But again the servants came back without the guests, bringing only their excuses. One of the invited guests said, "I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it. I pray thee have me excused." And off he went down the right-hand road into the country to his farm. Another said, "I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them; I pray thee have me excused." And off he went down the left-hand road into the country to his farm. Another said, "I am very busy to-day, buying and selling; I cannot leave the store." Another said, "I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come." None of these excuses were good ones. The new acres and the new oxen would keep until the morrow; the day of the

marriage of the prince was a holiday, and no time for shop-keeping; as for the man who was just married, he might have brought his wife along. It was plain that in truth the invited guests did not wish to sit at the king's table. That was what was the matter.

Indeed, a few of the servants did not come back from their errand, because some of the guests had not only declined the invitation which they brought, but had set the dogs upon them, and beaten them; some they had killed. The servants showed their torn coats and their bruised shoulders, and told the sad fate of their companions, and the king was very angry. He sent out soldiers to punish the murderers as they deserved.

Meanwhile, there was nobody to sit down to dinner with the king and queen, or to do honor to the prince and the new princess. So the king said to the servants, "The wedding is ready, but they which were bidden were not worthy. Go out now into the streets and lanes of the city and bring in all who will come,—the poor, the maimed, and the lame, and the blind." Then

the servants went as they were told into the streets and lanes and invited to the king's dinner those who had never had a good meal in their lives. "The king," they cried, "holds a great feast to-night in his royal palace. Even now the table is spread, with an ox at each end and any number of fatlings in between; and you are invited, and you, and you," pointing now to one and now to another. "Come you all into the king's banquet-hall and sit at the feast which the king gives in honor of his son."

So there came all manner of people, poor folks in rags, and men on crutches, and blind men led by their little boys or dogs. But even then the tables were not filled. For so generous and universal was the invitation that a good many people did not believe that the king had sent it. "Who are we?" they said one to another, "that the king should send for us? What cares he for the like of us?" They thought it was all too good to be true. So yet there was room. And the king sent the servants out again, saying, "Go out into the highways and hedges,

into the country, and along the roads, where strangers pass, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled." And the wedding at last was furnished with guests.

That is what our Lord said, and the Pharisees and Sadducees listened, knowing that he meant them. They were the court people, whom God the king had set in office and esteem in his kingdom. And God's servants, like John the Baptist, had gone bidding them to sit at the royal table and to enter into the joy of their Lord. John the Baptist had been killed, and the apostles had been turned away, as in old times the prophets had been stoned. So God would take them at their word, and would open the palace — his church — to all sorts of people, to Gentiles and Samaritans and publicans and sinners.

But there was another chapter in the story. This he spoke to such as were accepting the divine invitation. By and by, he said, after the tables were filled and the dinner was in progress, the king came in to see the guests. Now, one thing had been required of all who came:

each was to put on a wedding garment. But the people who lived in the lanes had no such fine attire, neither had the guests who had been found in the shade of the hedges, and the strangers who had been brought in from the highways had no such apparel in their bags. So the king provided wedding garments for them all. "This," said the servants at the door, "you must put on, — this robe of white, or that of purple, and then you may enter." But one man strode in, paying no attention. And when the king came in to see the guests, he saw this man sitting in his dusty coat. And the king called the man, and spoke to him in kind but reproving words. "Friend," he said, "how camest thou in hither, not having a wedding garment?" And the man was speechless. He had no excuse. He had thought that it did not matter. He had not taken the trouble to heed the king's one requirement. So the king told the servants to take him and turn him out; and out he went from the shining hall into the dark night.

Our Lord meant that God invites us all into

the joy of his presence, into his favor here and into heaven hereafter. No matter who we are, though we be poor and blind and lame, he asks us all. But he wishes us to put on the wedding garment of a good life; he wishes us to clothe ourselves with modesty, and honesty, and truth, with the mantle of charity and prayer. He who fails to do so, though he be but one among a multitude, God will discover him and send him into outer darkness.

Again, on one of those days when he taught in the Temple, he told about another wedding.

One time, he said, there were ten virgins who were waiting. There they sat, watching for a procession. The ten were bridesmaids, and that evening the bridegroom was to come to meet his bride, and they were all to go together to the wedding. And since it was dark, the ten had brought their lamps with them. The lamps were round bowls to hold oil, each with a wick to float in it; and each bowl had a sharp point at the bottom to stick into the end of a pole. Thus they were not unlike the torches which

are used nowadays in torchlight parades. But the wedding people were late in coming, — as is frequently the case, — and the watching was long, and the hours went on to ten and then to eleven, in a country where all people were accustomed to go to bed early, and finally the bridesmaids fell asleep. The torches stood, ten in a row, against the wall, and the bridesmaids slumbered and slept.

And at midnight there was a cry made, "Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him." And one looked, and there, far down the long street, were lights and people. The procession was approaching. So the ten maidens, in great haste, began to prepare their lamps. But now a discovery was made: five of the lamps were empty. Five of the bridesmaids had brought their lamps, but had neglected to put any oil into them. Were they thinking of their beautiful dresses, so that they forgot? Or did they say, "Oh, well, we shall manage somehow: we shall get some oil somewhere?" They were like the men and women who never say their prayers, nor go

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to church, nor think much about pleasing God, saying to themselves, "It will come out all right somehow."

But all the time the procession was advancing, and they had no oil; at least, they had only enough to make a little sputtering flicker in the wick. And the foolish maidens said unto the wise, "Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out." They thought that there would be enough oil to go around. There are some who think that if they do but belong to the church, or are members of a religious family, it will not matter much about their own lives: when the time comes, they will go into heaven with the others. But the foolish five were much mistaken. The wise five had just enough for themselves, and not a drop to spare. So the wise said, "You must go and buy some oil. Our lamps will go out, too, if we take any of our oil out, and there will be no lights to greet the bridegroom."

Then the foolish bridesmaids hurried away in great distress to find some oil. But it was now the middle of the night; the grocers had

long ago shut up their shops. Here they ran and there they ran, knocking at this door and at that, trying to buy or borrow oil; but all in vain.

And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came. The wedding procession, with music and laughter, and lights and singing, passed, and the wise virgins took their places in it, with their lamps shining like great stars. So they went to the house of the wedding. And when they were all in, do you know what they did? they shut the door. They that were ready went in with the bridegroom to the marriage, and the door was shut.

And by and by, there was a sound outside as of hurrying feet, and of hard breathing after long running, and there were the foolish virgins. They had no oil in their lamps, but they stood in the dark and knocked. They knocked and knocked, but the music drowned the sound. Then they called; "Lord, Lord," they cried, "open to us." But the bridegroom answered and said, "Verily, I say unto you, I know you not. Here are my friends, beside

me in the house. Who are you who come so late?"

"Watch, therefore," said the Master, "for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh." And when he comes, a lamp is of no use unless it has oil in it. And the Master looked at the Pharisees and Sadducees; for the lamp of a good profession will light no one into the approval of God without the oil of a good life.

IV

THE LAST SUPPER

On Thursday the Feast of the Passover began. It celebrated the birth of the Jewish nation. The Jews had been slaves in Egypt, and on that day, ages before, they had escaped. They had been in a great hurry, for they knew not at what moment the Egyptians might pursue them, and there had been no time for them to make bread. They had eaten supper, each family in its own house, having a lamb for meat. The blood of the lamb they had sprinkled on the side-posts of the door, as a sign to the avenging angel that Jews and not Egyptians lived there, and the angel, seeing the blood, had passed over their houses, but in every house of the Egyptians there was mourning that night. For bread, they mixed together flour and water, and baked it without yeast. This is what is called unleavened bread. And when the anniversary of that escape came round, centuries and centuries after, they kept

it by sitting down to the same kind of supper, — a lamb, and bread unleavened, — remembering how God had delivered their ancestors out of Egyptian bondage. This they do even to this day.

Jerusalem, then, was full of people; for the lamb must first be offered in the temple, and the supper must be eaten in the city. Every house was filled with guests. In all the markets men were buying lambs, in every kitchen women were making ready to roast them. Accordingly, that morning, the disciples said to the Master, "Where do we go to-day to eat the Passover? In whose house shall we find a room and a table for our feast?" But in the group stood Judas, listening. To-day, for the first time, the Master would stay in the city after dark; where would he stay? There might the rulers send to take him. There, in the night, when all the people were sitting at their suppers, and nobody was in the streets, he might be arrested without noise or tumult. Where would he go?

But our Lord saw the face of Judas. A man

who has such thoughts in his heart as Judas had, can hardly help showing them in his eyes, even if he does not reveal them with his lips. As the weeks had passed since the day when Jesus told the disciples that he would be put to death, he had seen a change in Judas. Judas had continued with the Twelve, but he had been ill at ease. He had hoped once, as did they all, that the King would appear in power. Indeed, as we have seen, they still had that hope, even as they drew near to Jerusalem on the last journey. But the hope of Judas had grown less and less. He had seen how our Lord's enemies increased in number and in hatred. For a moment, on the day of palms and psalms, he had held up his head, thinking that the city would receive its King. But the procession had been a failure, and after that Judas expected nothing. Then on Monday our Lord had driven out the traders ; and the Sadducees, as he knew well, would not forgive that. It was plain to Judas that all would soon be over. It was plain also to Jesus that Judas had lost hope, and with it had lost faith.

And therefore the false apostle listened eagerly to learn where the supper would be eaten. But our Lord had arranged it so that he should not know. Jesus turned to the two disciples in whom he felt he could put perfect trust and gave them his directions. "Go into Jerusalem," he said, "and in the street as you pass the gate you will see a man carrying a pitcher of water. Follow that man, and when he goes into a house, go in after him. Ask for the master of the house, and say to him, 'The Lord sends you this message: "Where is the guest chamber where I shall eat the Passover with my disciples?"' And he shall show you a large upper room furnished: then make ready." Thus Judas was no wiser than before.

The two went, and there was the man with the water pitcher; and as he turned about, they followed: so they came to the house, and all happened as the Master had arranged. There was a large upper room, reached by an outside stairway, and in it was a table, with couches placed about it. Then Peter and John carried a lamb to the Temple, that a priest might kill

it, and brought it back to have it cooked, and all things were made ready for the supper. The sun set, and the evening came, and under cover of the darkness our Lord and the others made their way down the Mount of Olives, into the city, to the upper room.

Now, as they took their places there was a strife among them which of them should be accounted the greatest; that is, they desired, each of them, to sit beside the Master in the place of honor. Peter said, "The place is mine: I am the oldest." John said, "No, it is mine: he likes me best." Our Lord seems not to have settled the matter, putting one above and one below. That was not his way. He showed them how it was all wrong, — all that contention as to which should fare better than another. He rose from the table and laid aside his cloak, and took a towel and tied it about his waist. After that, he poured water into a basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel. For in that country, where men wore sandals, it was the custom for a servant to wash the feet of

guests who came in from the heat and dust. Our Lord, then, looking into the faces of the Twelve who had been disputing which was the greatest, took the part of a servant. Peter, indeed, protested, as no doubt they all did. Peter said, "Lord, dost thou wash my feet? Thou shalt never wash my feet!" But our Lord insisted. He washed their feet, even the feet of Judas. Then he said, as he put his cloak about him, and took his place again, "Do you know what I have done? I whom you all call greatest have washed your feet, like a servant. That is what the greatest ought to do. He only is truly great who is serving others."

Then they went on with the Passover supper. There was a roasted lamb upon the table, and a dish of bitter herbs, like lettuce, with vinegar in which to dip them, and cakes of unleavened bread, round and flat. After they had eaten, came a solemn conclusion of the feast. A cup of wine was blessed and passed about, and then the herbs were eaten, each person dipping the leaves in the vinegar.

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Here our Lord paused, and looking about on the disciples said, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me." You know, he meant, how I sit here in peril of my life, how the rulers have passed a sentence against me that I must die, and are watching daily to take me. One of you, my friends, shall deliver me into their hands. This he said, with sorrow in his face. "The Scripture must be fulfilled," he said, "where it is written, 'He that eateth bread with me hath lifted up his heel against me.'" And they were exceeding sorrowful, and began every one of them to say unto him, "Lord, is it I? is it I?" To which our Lord replied, "He that dippeth his hand with me in the dish, the same shall betray me. One of you, my friends, who at this moment is eating this supper with me shall do this deed. The Son of man goeth as it is written of him: but woe unto that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! it had been good for that man if he had not been born." Then Judas said in a faint voice, "Is it I?" and John whispered,

lying next to Jesus, "Lord, who is it?" and the Lord dipped leaves in the vinegar and gave them to Judas, saying, "What thou doest, do quickly." But this he said in such a way that no man at the table knew the meaning of it. Some thought that Jesus was sending the treasurer on some necessary errand. Judas, however, knew. Up he started from the presence of his Master, from the company of the friends among whom he had lived so long and intimately, and turned his back upon them all, and went out into the night.

Then, in the order of the feast, came the blessing of a second cup, which was followed by the recitation of the story of the escape from Egypt, and by the singing of certain psalms, from the one hundred and thirteenth to the one hundred and fifteenth. And as he blessed the cup, and gave thanks, and told them to take it and divide it amongst themselves, he said, "I say unto you that I will drink no more of the fruit of the vine until that day that I drink it new in the kingdom of God." And they began to understand that the end

was near at hand and that this was the last supper.

Then he took bread, and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take, eat: this is my body, which is given for you: do this in remembrance of me." And then the cup, with which the Passover supper ended: and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, saying, "This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for you, and for many, for the remission of sins: do this, as oft as ye shall drink it, in remembrance of me." He had told them that he was to die, but now he added that he was to die for them and for many. And he asked them to remember. When you sit at the table together after I am gone, break the bread as I am doing, and pour the wine, and think of me; how my body was broken and my blood was shed.

After that, he talked with them long and tenderly, trying to show them how it was best for them that he should go away, and telling them that they must show their love for him by doing the things which he had taught them.

"I see that you are very sorry," he said. "Sorrow hath filled your heart. Indeed, the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered every man to his own, and shall leave me alone. Yet I will give you peace. Be of good cheer. I have overcome the world." Then he prayed with them, and when they had sung another hymn — the psalms, from the one hundred and fifteenth to the one hundred and eighteenth — they went out into the Mount of Olives.

V

IN THE GARDEN OF GETHSEMANE

THE full moon was shining as our Lord and the disciples came down the outer stairs from the upper room. The streets were still, except where sounds of merry voices came from the houses where happy people sat at the Passover table. The little company met no opposition on the way, and passed without hindrance through the city gate. The road ran down the hill into a deep valley, crossed the bridge of a little stream called the Kidron, and then climbed the ascent of the Mount of Olives. Over the brook, at the foot of the mountain, was a little garden of olive-trees, called Gethsemane.

On the way they had continued the conversation of the upper room. Did they remember, as they went down, the words of the psalm about the valley of the shadow of death? Into that dark valley they were now descending. "The time has fully come," the Master said,

"of which I have been telling you. The Pharisees and Sadducees will take me, and mock me and scourge me and spit upon me and kill me. And you, my friends, my dear friends, whom I have chosen to be with me, who have stayed beside me even when others turned their backs, even you will desert me. It is written, 'I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad.'" Then Peter, speaking first of all, cried, "Though all men shall be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended." To which our Lord replied, "I tell thee, Peter, that this very night before to-morrow dawns, even in this night before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice." But Peter declared more earnestly than before, "Lord, I am ready to go with thee both into prison and to death. Even if I should die with thee, I will not deny thee in any wise." Likewise also said they all.

So they came into the garden, and he left the disciples by the gate, saying, "Sit ye here, while I go and pray yonder." But he took Peter and James and John with him into the

deeper shade of the olives. The others sat upon the grass in the moonlight, some thinking, some sleeping, some listening to faint sounds as of one in great distress crying to God in prayer, but the words were lost in the babbling of the running brook, or in the rustle of the wind in the leaves of the trees.

Peter and James and John went with the Master. And he began to be both troubled and amazed. The more clearly he saw the certainty of his approaching death, the more impossible did it appear. He was not afraid. Even then he might have escaped easily. He had but to walk out of the garden gate, and on along the road over the Mount of Olives, past Bethany, into the country, and no man would harm him. If he would but live in peace and quietness, no Pharisee nor Sadducee would touch him. All that they wished for was that he would be silent. He might still live, if he would return to the bench of the carpenter. But that was utterly impossible. He had come, the Son of God, in the name of God, to teach the truth of God. That was his whole

life : he could not imagine himself living and not doing that.

But that he who thus came, on such a mission, with such a message, should be rejected; that he whose heart was full of love should be hated; that they to whom he came should kill him, — this amazed him, with a sad and dreadful amazement. And he said to the three, "My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even unto death : tarry ye here and watch with me." And he went forward a little, and fell upon the ground, and prayed that if it were possible the hour might pass from him. Must it be? Must this calamity come? To die was little, but thus to die was terrible beyond all speech or thought. That the Pharisees and Sadducees should kill him, the very clergy of the church, with the approval of the church people, — this was what broke his heart. If the common sinners of the street had hated him, he could have borne it; but that the good should hate him, that men should come out of church, from the act of prayer, and plan to kill him,— this amazed him and crushed him to the

ground. He fell upon his face and prayed, saying, "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; let me not thus die by the hands of those whom I love: nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt."

And he came out of the deep shadow to the three disciples, and found them sleeping, and said to Peter, who had made such great promises, "What, could ye not watch with me one hour?" And then he added, seeing that they were very tired, "The spirit, indeed, is willing, but the flesh is weak." Again he went back into the darkness, and being in an agony, he prayed more earnestly, saying, "O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done." And his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground. And when he rose up from prayer, and was come unto his disciples, he found them again asleep, partly for weariness and partly for sorrow. Then, going back he prayed a third time, saying the same words: and the third time, when he went for sympathy to the disciples, he found them

again asleep. And when they waked at the sound of his steps, and were ashamed and sorry, he said, "Sleep on now, and take your rest."

But now there was a noise as of hurrying feet in the road which led from the city. Torches were seen flickering between the trees by the bridge across the Kidron. Jesus knew well what it all meant. "It is enough," he cried, waking the three, and calling to the others. "The hour is come. Behold, the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. Rise up, let us go to meet them; lo, he that betrayeth me is at hand."

Judas had gone from the last supper to find the men to whom he had sold his soul. He may have said, "The prophet is in such and such a house, in the upper room, with only the group of his apostles with him. Send a band with me, and we may take him before he goes." If so, they came too late, finding the place empty. But the next step was sure. "He will be found, then, in the Garden of Gethsemane." For with this quiet spot the

apostles were familiar. Many times they had resorted thither. Judas knew every tree, and could find his way from corner to corner, even in the dim light of the moon. There he had lain in the heat of the day, and in the cool of the evening, close by the Master, and had listened as he talked. Judas knew it well. To the garden, accordingly, he brought his band of servants from the high priest's house, and now they came with lanterns and torches and weapons. And the traitor had given them a sign, saying, "Whomsoever I shall kiss, that same is he; take him, and lead him away safely." And as soon as he was come, he went straightway to Jesus, as if he were still one of the twelve friends, saying, "Master, Master," and kissed him.

Then they laid their hands on Jesus, and took him. And Peter, quick and impulsive now as always, stretched out his hand and drew a sword which he had buckled to his side, and struck the nearest man, cutting off his ear. But the resistance went no further. One of the other apostles had a sword, but he

did not draw it. Indeed, Jesus told Peter to put his sword into its sheath. "Do you not know," he said, "that if I were to ask my Father, he would send me instantly an army of angels? But it may not be." And, hearing that, all the apostles — first Peter, and then James and John and Thomas and the others — forsook him and fled. Away they went, running in dreadful haste this way and that among the trees of the garden. And Jesus was left alone.

But as they who had arrested Jesus led him out of the gate, a single strange figure came in sight. A young man, evidently just from bed, came following after, having a sheet wrapped about him. Some of the band turned back and drove him away and chased him, catching the sheet but not succeeding in catching him. Out he went into the darkness and was lost to sight. It is in St. Mark's Gospel that this white-gowned person appears, and some have thought that he was none other than St. Mark himself. We know that Mark was then a lad living in Jerusalem, and that

a few months later his mother's house was the meeting-place of the disciples. It may be that the upper room was in that house, and that Mark, awakened by Judas and his searching party, had hurried, just as he was, to warn our Lord at Gethsemane, and had arrived in time to hear how Jesus prayed while the disciples slept, and to see the great drops as of blood upon his forehead.

VI

CHRIST BEFORE CAIAPHAS

It was past midnight, but the moon lighted the way. They that had laid hold on Jesus led him over the Kidron bridge, beneath which the little river ran like a stream of silver. Before them, at the summit of the hill, rose the walls of the city and the open gate. At first, as they entered, the people seemed to be asleep. The streets were empty and all the windows dark; only a sentry was pacing back and forth along the castle wall. But presently there was a sound of running feet. The palace of the high priest was all alight, and out of the entrance servants were running down this street and that, knocking on the doors of great houses; and men looked out and said, "What is the matter?" and the servants answered, "He is taken; you know who. There is to be a meeting of the Sanhedrin immediately, that he may be put on trial."

The Jewish people had two rulers. One was Pilate, the Roman governor, who was the head of the state; the other was Caiaphas, the high priest, who was the head of the church. The high priest could do nothing without the consent of the standing committee, the Sanhedrin. The members of this committee were, therefore, summoned out of their sleep. While our Lord was being led along in the midst of the police and the crowd, they were hastily putting on their clothes, and making their way to the place of meeting. Jesus was brought in, and the trial began.

The high priest asked Jesus of his disciples and of his doctrine. He answered, "I spake openly to the world: I ever taught in the synagogue, and in the temple, whither the Jews always resort, and in secret have I said nothing. Why askest thou me? ask them which heard me what I have said unto them: behold, they know what I said." And as he finished speaking, an attendant, one of the lower officers of the court, struck him in the face with the palm of his hand. The servant, seeing no

doubt how all was going, and thinking to gain favor with his master, struck the King, saying, "Answerest thou the high priest so?" Our Lord turned and said quietly, "If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil; but if well, why smitest thou me?" But the high priest did not rebuke the brutal servant.

Instead of that, the priests and elders, and all the council, sought false witness against Jesus, to put him to death. They were determined to kill him, but they wished to kill him legally. They knew that many of the people believed him to be a prophet. They feared that they would be called to account for what they did. So they were careful to observe the form of law. There must be witnesses, two at least, to testify against a criminal. If they could find no true ones, false witnesses would do as well.

So the servants hurried again into the night to bring in witnesses. Now one day, as he taught in the temple, Jesus had said something which nobody quite understood. Whether the words themselves were so mysterious, or whether there was so much confusion that

they were not heard distinctly, we do not know. Anyhow, they were reported to the authorities, in one way and another, and they were now brought up against him. Two false witnesses came and said: "This fellow said, 'I am able to destroy the temple of God, and to build it in three days.'" But they did not agree. They could not remember exactly what he said. Even the apostles did not understand it, though long after, thinking it over, they concluded that he must have spoken of the temple of his body. But nobody knows. He had said something, however, about the destruction of the temple: that was plain. He had spoken, they believed, against that holy place in whose service the Sadducees were engaged. And so speaking, he had spoken against the Sadducees. There they sat, then, in the council, ready to vote against him.

But the false witnesses had not agreed together. Another evidence must be found against him in order to convict him legally. So the high priest, clad in his robes of office, stood up solemnly in the midst, and asked Jesus,

saying, "Answerest thou nothing? what is it which these witness against thee?" But he held his peace, and answered nothing. And the high priest said unto him, "I adjure thee, by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God." Thus the moment came which our Lord had long awaited. "Do not tell," he said to Peter, on the day of the great recognition. "Do not tell," he said to the three, as they came down from the mountain of the transfiguration. He himself would declare the great truth in his own time. Thus he stood looking into the faces of the leaders of the people. "Yes," he said, "I am. I am the Christ, the Son of God. By and by you shall see me sitting on the right hand of power and coming in the clouds of heaven."

Then the high priest rent his clothes; he grasped his flowing gown of linen and tore it from top to bottom, as was then the way of men in great excitement. "He hath spoken blasphemy," he cried. "He claims to be the Christ, the Messiah promised of the prophets, the King of Glory, the Son of God. What fur-

ther need have we of witnesses? Behold, now ye have heard his blasphemy. What think ye?" Our Lord's mysterious words about the temple had determined the Sadducees to vote against him: this declaration decided the Pharisees. It was as they had suspected, then; this Nazareth carpenter, who had despised their customs, claimed to be the Christ. But, indeed, they were all against him. The trial was no trial. Even as they came out of their houses their minds were made up. "What think ye?" They answered and said, "He is guilty of death."

Thus it all ended. He who had come from heaven, in whom God dwelt and he in God, of whom the Father of all had said, "This is my beloved Son," the King of Glory, was condemned to death. He told them who he was: I am your King, — and they cried out against him. The high priest rejected him. So did the lesser priests, and the preachers of the synagogue, and the whole church. The church of God resolved to kill the Son of God.

The church, however, had no power to put any man to death. That belonged to the state. Caiaphas had condemned Jesus, but in order that the false Christ, as he thought, should be killed, he must be given over into the hands of Pilate. It was as yet too early in the morning to see Pilate. The moon had gone down, but the sun had not yet risen. They must wait. Jesus was, therefore, given into the charge of the servants of the palace till the day should dawn. The scribes and elders returned to their homes. Jesus, with his hands tied, stood amidst the servants. And the servants, seeing in him one whom their masters had condemned to death, mocked him. They struck him first on one cheek, then on the other, and spat in his face. They put a cloth over his eyes to blindfold him, and each, in turn, dancing about him beat him, crying with each blow, "Thou prophet, prophesy now, who is he that smote thee?"

In the mean time two of the fleeing disciples, seeing that nobody was following them, had turned back. Keeping in the shadow of the walls and houses, they approached the palace

of the high priest, and at last, plucking up courage, entered. The first to go in was John ; and finding that no attention was given to him, he went out and brought in Peter. The palace was built about an open court, into which the rooms opened. Across this court were clattering little breathless groups of men, — belated members of the council, servants going on hasty errands. In a hall whose lights shone out into the court Christ was standing before Caiaphas. It was cold in the early spring morning, and the servants had built a charcoal fire on the stone pavement, and stood about it warming themselves. And Peter joined them, holding out his cold hand to the blaze. But Peter, as we have already seen, was a talkative person, and now in his great excitement he could not keep silent. It was plain by the look of him that he was a stranger from the country. His clothes hinted that and his voice proved it; for the fishermen of Galilee had a way of speaking which people in Jerusalem thought to be queer. They did not pronounce their words as the city people did.

No sooner, then, had Peter opened his mouth than the man to whom he spoke knew that he came from Galilee.

The first to address Peter was a maid-servant, who attended the door. She said, at once, as he came in, "Art not thou also one of this man's disciples?" And Peter, already tired from lack of sleep, nervous and afraid, and now taken by surprise, said, "I am not." John and he had come to see the end, — the end of all their hopes. There were no longer any disciples. That beautiful brotherhood had been broken up. The Master was on trial for his life, and they who had followed him would see him no more. So Peter spoke out of the bitterness of his heart. He had been his disciple, but he was such no longer.

Peter came in, then, and stood by the fire, getting what news he could about the proceedings in the palace, but looking so miserable that another maid-servant gazed curiously at him and said, "And thou also wast with Jesus of Nazareth." But he denied a second time, saying, "I know not what you say;" that is,

"I don't know what you are talking about." And he went out into the porch, into the passage which led from the court into the street. As he stood by the gate a first faint streak of light began to appear in the east, and a rooster in some neighboring barnyard sounded the signal of approaching day: the cock crew.

What had the Lord said about the crowing of the cock? Peter started back, but as he did so the woman at the gate called to the men at the fire. "See this fellow," she cried; "is he not one of them?" "Yes," they answered, looking sharply at him, "he is a Galilean; his speech shows that." And one of them, a kinsman of the man whose ear Peter cut off, started up and said, "Yes, yes, I saw him in the garden with him." And Peter began to call even Heaven to witness that he was no disciple of the Prophet. "I do not even know this man of whom ye speak." And again the cock crew.

And at that moment Jesus was led forth, and, hearing Peter say these words, the Lord

turned and looked upon him. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said unto him, "Before the cock crow twice thou shalt deny me thrice." And he went out and wept bitterly.

VII

CHRIST BEFORE PILATE

At last the day came which we call Good Friday, and early in the morning the officers of the Sanhedrin took Jesus to deliver him to Pilate.

They had already been to prayers in the temple. They had bowed down before God, asking him to bless them. They came from the trial before Caiaphas on their way to the trial before Pilate, and the service was a quiet interval between. There they prayed before the altar, while in the priest's house the Lord of Life was being mocked and spat upon. And they were not bad men: that, as I have said, was the strangest part of it. They were quite sure that they were doing right. They said their prayers with as clear a conscience as any inquisitor before he burned his neighbor at the stake. They acted as they did, not because their hearts were full of sin, but because their minds were full of prejudice. They

considered themselves good churchmen; they stood for the old way of the church. And he was not a good churchman: so they said. That was the heart of the whole matter. That is why they hated him and killed him. They were afraid that the Son of God would do harm to the church.

But there was an unpleasant interruption in the midst of that early service. Suddenly, as they were saying their prayers, a man came in with a wild, excited voice, having his hands full of silver pieces. "I have sinned," he cried, "in that I have betrayed the innocent blood." In he came out of a sleepless night, filled with bitter remorse. Judas had done a deed which has made his name despised and hated. He had betrayed his friend. But there was good in him, in spite of that. Nobody knows why he did it. The little money that he got for it seems an insufficient reason. Anyhow, he was sorry for it. However full his heart may have been of evil when Satan entered into him, it was full now of the old love. He came to make a desperate appeal. "Let him go," he asked.

"He has done nothing amiss, I have betrayed the innocent blood." "What is that to us?" said the priests and elders, scowling at him. "See thou to that!" Then Judas raised his hands and flung the silver from him. Away flew the thirty pieces, ringing and sliding over the temple floor. And the traitor went and hanged himself.

The elders and scribes and the whole council carried Jesus bound to Pilate. But Pilate was a Roman and a heathen. When he thought of God, — which was not very often, — he thought of him as Jupiter, not as Jehovah; and when he said his prayers he sprinkled grains of incense on burning coals before an idol. The scribes felt that God would not like them if they touched their feet to Pilate's floor. So they stood calling for Pilate, with a crowd gathering out of the neighboring streets, and the news spreading about the town that the Prophet had been seized at last; he had been seized and had made no resistance. One cried, "He said that he could bring down twelve regiments of angels." "Yes," answered an-

other, "but he did not do it." Thus the enthusiasm of Sunday and Monday, such as it was, passed away. Some there were who cared, but not many, and they were mostly in hiding. The crowd did not care.

Pilate heard their voices as he sat at breakfast, and went out. "What accusation," said he, "bring ye against this man?" They said, "He claims to be the King, the King of the Jews." That was, indeed, a serious accusation, and a true one. They meant it for a charge of treason. Cæsar at Rome was the King of the Jews; the scribes wished Pilate to believe that our Lord was the leader of a rebellion, that he was planning a revolution against Rome. It was easy to believe that. The Jews hated to be under the rule of the Romans, and many times rebelled, sometimes for a day in a single city, sometimes in a fierce and wide revolt. At that moment there was lying in Pilate's prison a man named Barabbas, who had led a riot in the streets of Jerusalem in which men had lost their lives. The charge, then, was a likely one.

But Pilate did not believe it. He already knew something about Jesus. He knew that the priests had delivered him for envy, because they feared that he would influence the people against them. He knew that the King of the Jews had undertaken no quarrel against Rome. So he took Jesus into his palace, leaving the council and the crowd outside, and said, "Art thou the King of the Jews?" Jesus answered, "Why do you ask? Do you say this of yourself, or did others tell it of me?" Pilate replied, "Am I a Jew? Thine own nation and the chief priests have delivered thee unto me: what hast thou done?" Jesus said, "I am indeed a king, but not of an earthly kingdom. In my kingdom there is neither crown nor army. I was born and came into the world that I should bear witness to the truth. The kingdom of God which I preach is the kingdom of the truth." Pilate did not understand. "What is truth?" he said. But it was plain that here was no cause for the interference of a Roman governor. He went out to the multitude before the pal-

ace door, and said, "I find no fault in him at all."

Then was the whole council filled with anger and great dread. They had delivered Jesus to Pilate, and Pilate was about to set him free. Thus the end would be worse than the beginning. They cried out with loud voices, making all manner of charges against him. One said, "He forbids the people to pay taxes;" and another, "He has set the whole land in commotion, from Galilee to Judea." "If he is a Galilean," said the governor, "he belongs to Herod," — the Herod who had beheaded John the Baptist. Pilate tried, accordingly, to transfer the case to Herod, but in vain. Still the crowd, continuously increasing, besieged the door.

Pilate then thought of Barabbas. "Here," he said to the people, "is another man under a like accusation. He, too, has taken part in an insurrection, an evil part. You have your choice, now, for I will follow the old custom and release a prisoner at the Passover. Which will you choose, Jesus or Barabbas?" It seemed

JESUS BEFORE PILATE

for a moment that the multitude would ask for the release of Jesus. Why should they not? He had gone about among them doing good, healing the sick, bringing cheer to the poor, making himself one of the people, and never seeking his own gain. And the people had heard him gladly. But the city is different from the country, and a crowd is different from the men who comprise it. A crowd will do what hardly a man in it would be willing to do alone. Moreover, the priests and the scribes, the influential people, persuaded the crowd. What was Reuben to say, coming from the farm, or Levi, from the fishing fleet, in answer to these great men.

So the crowd obeyed the rulers, and when Pilate said, "Shall it be Jesus or Barabbas?" they cried with a great voice, "Barabbas!" Pilate said, "What will ye then that I shall do unto him whom ye call the King of the Jews?" And they cried out again, "Crucify him." Then said Pilate unto them, "Why, what evil hath he done?" But they had no other answer. They cried out the more exceed-

ingly, "Crucify him." And with the other voices some were heard which said, "If thou let this man go thou art not Cæsar's friend; whosoever maketh himself a king speaketh against Cæsar." And that word settled Pilate's mind. He was himself in peril, then. They would carry a report to Rome, and there were enemies who were ready to make the most of it.

Even as he sat, however, on the judgment seat, ready to deliver to the death of the cross a man whom he knew to be guiltless of any wrong, his wife sent him a message. "Do nothing," she said, "against that just man. All night I dreamed about him, dreadful dreams." But it was too late. Pilate did indeed take a basin of water, and wash his hands before the multitude saying, "I am innocent of the blood of this just person: see ye to it." But the crowd answered, "His blood be on us and on our children." And Barabbas was released.

Jesus was then given over to the soldiers, as was the way with a condemned prisoner, that they might scourge him. And the soldiers took him into the common hall, and gath-

ered the whole band together, and they took off his own clothes, and put a purple robe upon him, some ragged and tarnished cast-off finery; and they made a crown of thorns and put it on his head, and into his tied hands they thrust a reed for a sceptre, and they pretended to do homage to him as a king, bowing down on their knees before him each in order, saluting him, "Hail, King of the Jews!" then spitting in his face, and striking him with the reed.

Even after this scourging and mocking, Pilate made one more effort to release his prisoner. He appealed to the pity of the multitude. The king was led before his people, with the mock crown on his head and the mock sceptre in his hand, and the ragged robe of royal purple over his shoulders; and Pilate said, "Behold, I bring him forth to you, that ye may know that I find no fault in him. Look at him. Behold the man!" But when they saw him there was no pity in their hearts. They cried the same fierce cry, "Crucify him, crucify him." "What!" said Pilate, "shall I

crucify your king?" And they all answered, "We have no king but Cæsar." Thus the last word was spoken. Our Lord's own clothes were put again upon him, and he was led away to be crucified.

VIII

CRUCIFIED, DEAD, AND BURIED.

THE death sentence was pronounced a little before nine o'clock. Since there was danger of disturbance when the pilgrims from Galilee should hear that the Prophet of Nazareth was to be crucified, it was decided to proceed without delay. Our Lord's clothes having been put again upon his back, covering the wounds made by the scourge, he was led out on the way to the place of execution.

Pilate's soldiers marched before and behind him. Two thieves who had been brought out of prison, having a like sentence, went the one on the right hand and the other on the left. And a crowd followed, made up partly of clergymen, partly of pitying women, and partly of idlers from the corners of the streets. Afar off came a few friends, the apostle John, and his mother, — who, as you remember, was our Lord's aunt, — and Mary Magdalene, and another Mary, mother of James the Little,

and with her the mother of our Lord himself.

Thus the forlorn procession passed along the streets, and out of the gate of the city to the place of execution. Our Lord, like the two thieves, carried his cross upon his back. One of the soldiers had a hammer and some stout nails. Another who walked in front had a board which bore an inscription. The board was to be nailed over our Lord's head upon the cross. "The King of the Jews," it said, showing who he was and for what crime he suffered: — "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews." The priests had entreated Pilate to change it, so that it should read, "I am the King of the Jews," meaning that this was a false claim which he made. But Pilate would not change a word.

The cross was heavy and our Lord was very weary. All night he had had no sleep; since the supper in the upper room he had eaten nothing. And he had suffered much; the agony in the garden, the pain of betrayal by Judas and of denial by Peter, the shame

JESUS LEAVING THE PRÆTORIUM

of condemnation by Caiaphas and by Pilate, the distress of the scourging; besides, he had been on his feet since midnight. It was too much. He stumbled and fell beside the city gate.

Now at that moment there was coming in out of the country a strong-armed person named Simon of Cyrene. Simon was the father of two sons who were afterwards numbered among the disciples. They may have been with him that morning; two boys, one named Alexander and one named Rufus, each holding a hand. The soldiers stopped this countryman, and taking the cross from the shoulders of our Lord put it on the broad shoulders of Simon, and the procession moved again; the little boys, if they were there, coming on behind their father, very scared and silent.

The women bewailed and lamented, seeing that our Lord could not carry the cross. But he turned to them and said, "Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me. Weep for yourselves and for your children, for the city which thus crucifies the innocent shall be

surely punished." Indeed, the day came when the Romans set up hundreds of crosses along that same road, and on them crucified the chief citizens of Jerusalem, and the city, as our Lord had said, was laid level with the ground.

At last they came to the hill called Golgotha. The crosses were laid upon the ground. They who were to be crucified were fastened to them by nails driven through the hands and through the feet. The crosses were lifted up, and thrust heavily into the earth, into holes dug to receive them. All this time our Lord had said no word. No cry had come from his lips when the nails pierced his hands and his feet. Now he spoke, praying for those who had done this thing: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

An opiate was offered him, as was the custom in crucifixion, to deaden the pain, wine mingled with myrrh; but when he had tasted it and knew what it was, he would not drink it. He would meet death with a clear mind. Then the soldiers, when they had crucified

Jesus, took his garments, and made four parts, to every soldier a part; for the soldiers had the clothes of those who were crucified. But his coat was without seam, woven from the top throughout. They said, therefore, among themselves, "Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be." So they cast lots. And the rulers derided him, saying, "He saved others; let him save himself, if he be Christ, the chosen of God." And the soldiers, each with his share of our Lord's garments under his arm, cried, "If thou be the King of Israel, save thyself." Even the thieves joined in this cry of derision, saying, "If thou be Christ, save thyself and us." Thus from all sides came this noise of hatred: "He saved others, himself he cannot save. Let Christ, the King of Israel, descend now from the cross, that we may see and believe."

But one of the thieves joined but faintly in this uproar, and presently rebuked the other. "Dost not thou fear God," he said, "and you in the hour of death? We, indeed,

are punished justly, for we receive the due reward of our deeds; but this man hath done nothing amiss." And he turned to Jesus, in the face of the soldiers and the deriding priests, and said, "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom." And Jesus said unto him, "Verily, I say unto thee, to-day shalt thou be with me in paradise."

Then our Lord saw his mother standing by the cross, and with her the apostle John, whom he loved the best of all. And he said to his mother, "Behold thy son!" meaning that John was now to be a son to her. And to John he said, "Behold thy mother!" And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home.

So the painful moments passed, and noonday came, and black clouds rose up and covered the sky and hid the face of the sun, as if the world itself were going into mourning for this death. And darkness deepened in the soul of Jesus. "*Eloi, eloi,*" he cried, "*lama sabachthani?*" The very words have been remembered, as if his voice had given them a

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GOLGOTHA

meaning which could not be translated. "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" This was the first sentence of a psalm which was written by one who, thinking that God had deserted him, found that after all God loved him, through all his sufferings, with an unfailing love. They who stood by, faintly hearing what he said, mistook the meaning. "Eloi" sounded like "Elias." "Behold," they said, "he calleth for Elijah. Let alone; let us see whether Elijah will come to take him down." Even then, they thought, some miracle might happen. There might be a sudden shining in the black sky, and down might come the prophet of the old time, riding in his chariot of fire. And as Jesus said "I thirst," they filled a sponge with vinegar and put it on a reed and lifted it to his mouth, partly in pity, partly in awe. Jesus then cried with a loud voice, "It is finished," adding a word of faith and prayer, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit," and so died.

It was then three o'clock, and the next day was the sabbath; and the sabbath, according

to their custom, began at sundown on the day before. The priests accordingly asked Pilate for leave to put the thieves out of their misery, so that all the bodies might be removed before the holy day. And Pilate gave permission. Then came the soldiers and brake the legs of the two thieves and killed them, but Jesus, they found, was dead already; to make sure, one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side.

Then came forward two members of the council, men of eminence, who had been disciples of Jesus in secret for fear of their neighbors. He was now dead, indeed, and it was too late, as it seemed, to do anything for him; but remorse made them bold. Joseph of Arimathea went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Nicodemus brought myrrh and aloes to embalm it. They took the body from the cross, and laid it in a cave in Joseph's garden. Then, because the hour was late, leaving the embalming unfinished, they rolled a great stone to the mouth of the cave, putting their shoulders to it, and departed.

When the moon arose there remained only a group of soldiers, placed on guard, pacing up and down before the tomb of him who had claimed to be the King of Glory and the Son of God.

IX

THE EMPTY TOMB

The disciples of the dead prophet had one consolation. Nothing could rob them of the memory of their friend. All day Saturday they thought of him. It was the sabbath, but it is not likely that they went to church. How could they worship in the temple with Sadducees, or in the synagogue with Pharisees, who had brought their Master to the death upon the cross? Somewhere, no doubt, they met; perhaps in the upper room where they had sat with him at the last supper. There they prayed that God would give them comfort and understanding; there they remembered Him.

These men had had an experience such as nobody else has had since the world began: they had known a Perfect Man. It is true that the Pharisees and Sadducees did not think that he was perfect. They criticised him, as we have seen, and found such faults in him that they desired to kill him. But what

seemed faults to them, seemed virtues to the disciples, and all men since have agreed with the disciples. Jesus was the one Perfect Man of all time. In him our human nature came to its highest excellence. He lived our common life, and was tempted in all things like as we are, yet he sinned not. The best men that ever lived have tried and prayed to be like him, and none of them have succeeded.

The Perfect Man died because in order to live he must submit to the Pharisees and Sadducees: and he could not do that. The most important thing in the world is true religion, because that means the good health of the soul. God had appointed the Jews to be the teachers of true religion, but they had fallen into error. The Pharisees and Sadducees were teaching that which was not true concerning God and concerning man. Our Lord came that he might establish the kingdom of the truth; that is, that he might show us how to live aright. He came to save our souls. But the Pharisees and Sadducees were so sure that they themselves were right that they put him

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to death. Thus he died in the endeavor to give us true religion. He laid down his life for our sake.

But that was not all. Other men have died for love of God and man. He was not like other men. He was the Christ, the Son of God. He said mysterious words about himself — words which are still mysterious — declaring that he came from heaven, and would come again, and that whoever had seen him had seen the Father. God was in him, he said, and he in God. In him was fulfilled the saying: "God so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Men had asked, "Does God care?" He who made us, and put us in this world where sin and pain abound, is he truly concerned about us? does it matter to him that we suffer? does it matter to him whether we do right or wrong? does God care?" There was no answer to this question in nature. So God sent his Son to answer it. The Son of God came to tell us of the love of God. He

said that God cares for every one of us. He said that sin is a very dreadful thing, and endangers our souls as disease endangers our bodies, and grieves God. He said that God feels towards sinners as the father felt towards the prodigal son, and that every sinner who is truly sorry for his sin will be forgiven. And all this he showed by his life and by his death. He by whom God spoke to man went about healing the sick and comforting the sad, and at last for our sake died upon the cross. "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." Jesus in the name of God laid down his life even for his enemies. Then he said that his body would be broken and his blood shed for our sake, to save us from our sins, and that he came to give his life a ransom for the world, and in those words are great meanings of his death such as even now the wisest men do but dimly understand. God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself.

But was that true? Was God in Christ? was it indeed the most high God who spoke

by him? Of course, the Perfect Man will tell the truth. We may believe what he says, because his life shows that he is in God and God in him. But even the Perfect Man may not know it all; he may guess at some of it. We want to be absolutely sure. We want to know with certain knowledge, that this which the Perfect Man says of the love of God is no guess, but is the truth. We are not satisfied with the word even of the Perfect Man; we would have the word of God. But he who said that he was the Son of God died like a man. Could he be the Son of God and die like that?

Even the men who had been his nearest friends could not give a good answer to that question. They lay awake all night Friday and Saturday thinking about it, and talked of it all day. They had seen him die. They had seen the nails in his hands and feet, and the wound of the spear in his side. He was as dead as the two thieves. Where were all his great words now?

At the time when our Lord was buried,

certain women had stood by to see where he was laid. Two of them were mothers of apostles, — Salome, the mother of James and John, and Mary, the mother of James the Little; two had been grievously sick and our Lord had healed them, Mary Magdalene, and Joanna, the wife of Herod's steward. There had been no time on Friday to embalm the body. It had been wrapped in linen, and myrrh and aloes had been placed about it; but then the sabbath had come. The women, accordingly, had gone away weeping, and had agreed to meet very early on the first day of the week, — as we say, on Sunday, — to finish the embalming. So on the sabbath, which we call Saturday, they sat still, thinking and talking and crying; and on Sunday morning, as the day began to dawn, they started from the city to go to the garden where the Lord was buried.

It was a day in spring, and the shadows of the night still lay upon the world. The women could but dimly see the way before them. There were deeper shadows in their hearts.

As they came near to the garden, one of them said, "The stone! the great stone which Joseph and Nicodemus rolled before the mouth of the cave: how shall we roll it away?" They were all much troubled about it. But as they entered the garden and came in sight of the place, behold, the stone was rolled away. They knew not what to think. Who had done this thing? There was the mouth of the cave, black and open in the dim light. They came near, trembling and afraid, and looked in; and the tomb was empty. They said one to another, "They have taken away our Lord." But who had taken the body away, or where they had laid it, they could not imagine. The tomb was empty; that was plain. They said, "We must go at once and tell the disciples." But as they turned to go, they became aware of two men in long, white, shining garments; and the women, when they saw them, fell down upon their faces in great fear. But the men said, "Why seek ye the living among the dead. He is not here; but is risen. Remember how he spake unto you when he was yet in Galilee,

saying, 'The Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again.'" And they remembered his words. He had told them that he would rise again, but they had not understood. They had not thought of such a rising as this. "The Lord is risen," said the man in white, "he is alive for evermore." With this wonderful news the women hurried back to the city. The shadows were gone, the sun was shining, the sky was bright, and all the birds were singing. The women ran along the road in fear, and joy, and great amazement.

Thus they came to the apostles' lodging and knocked upon the door. "The tomb," they cried, "is empty. The great stone is rolled away and the body is not there. And we saw a vision of angels which told us that he who was dead is now alive." But the apostles did not believe it. It might, indeed, be true that the tomb was empty: they believed that. But they paid no attention to what the women said about the angels. "You imagined it," they said: "there were no angels. That is an idle tale."

Nevertheless, they saw that the story of the women called them at once to examine the tomb, and two of them, Peter and John, started together for the garden. They ran both together, but John, probably because he was the younger, left Peter far behind, and came first to the sepulchre. He stooped down and looked in. The tomb was empty indeed: nothing was to be seen except the linen which had been wrapped about the body. Then came Peter, breathing hard from running, and went into the sepulchre. Perhaps the body had been laid in some deeper recess of the cave. No, the tomb was empty. There on the ground lay the linen clothes, but the napkin which had been about his head was not lying with the linen clothes, but was wrapped together in a place by itself. There was no sign of violence or of haste. It did not look as if the grave had been robbed. But the grave was empty. John went in, and was as perplexed as Peter. So they went back to their own home, walking slowly, with their eyes upon the ground, thinking and wondering.

X

THE KING WALKS WITH TWO DISCIPLES

All day the disciples had been perplexed with rumors. Now somebody said that the women had seen not only an angel, but the Lord himself. Jesus met them, saying "All hail!" and they came and held him by the feet and worshiped him. Then somebody else said that there had been an earthquake in the middle of the night, and that the angel of the Lord had descended from heaven and rolled back the stone from the door and sat upon it. The women had seen him, and his face was like lightning and his raiment white as snow.

Presently it was reported that Mary Magdalene had seen the Lord. Mary was standing by the door of the sepulchre weeping, and as she wept she stooped down and looked into the sepulchre, and there were two angels sitting, the one at the head and the other at the

feet where the body of Jesus had lain. And they said, "Why do you weep?" and she answered, "Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him." And when she had thus said she turned back, and saw Jesus standing, and knew not that it was Jesus. Jesus said, "Why do you weep? Whom do you seek?" She supposed that it was the gardener. The morning was still dark and her eyes were full of tears. "Sir," she said, speaking to the gardener, "if thou hast borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away." Jesus said, "Mary." She turned and recognized him, and cried "My Master!" And Jesus told her not to touch him, but to go and tell his brethren, the disciples. So she went in haste and told them as they mourned and wept. "He is alive," she said. "I have seen him with my eyes." But even then they did not believe.

That afternoon two men, one of whom was named Cleopas, took a long walk. They lived in a village called Emmaus, half a dozen miles

out of Jerusalem. They had been in the city over the sabbath and were returning home. They may have stood beside the cross; they may have spent the day with the disciples; all that we know is that they had been friends and followers of our Lord. And as they went they talked together of all these things that had happened. The sun, which had been shrouded in darkness on Friday, was now shining brightly, and all the spring birds were singing Easter carols in the green trees, and Easter flowers were shining all along beside the road. It was a beautiful, glad day. But the two men did not see the sun; they did not hear the birds; as for the buds and blossoms, they might have been briers and brambles, the men would not have known the difference. For do you know what they were doing as they walked between the pleasant fields? They were both crying. These grown men were crying as they went so that everybody who passed them on the way noticed them. People stopped to look after them and said: "What has happened? Have they had

bad news? Are they returning from a funeral? Why do they cry?"

At last, as they came into the country, and the city was out of sight behind them, one of the passers-by spoke to them. "What are you talking about?" he said, "as ye walk and are sad?" And Cleopas answered, "You must be a stranger in Jerusalem. You must have come to the Passover from a long way off, or you would not ask. Do you not know the things that are come to pass then in these days?" And he said, "What things?" And they said, "Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people: and how the chief priests and our rulers delivered him to be condemned to death, and have crucified him. We believed in him with all our hearts. We thought that he was the Christ, the deliverer of Israel. But he died and was buried. That was three days ago. There have been strange things said to-day. Certain women of our company went out very early this morning to the sepulchre and found it empty. They came back

declaring that they had seen a vision of angels which said that he was alive. But when some of the men went they found only the empty tomb. They saw no angels, neither did they see the Lord. He was crucified and dead and buried, and his body has been taken away. That is all that we know. Do you wonder that we go home crying as we go?"

As they spoke the stranger walked beside them, and when the tears came again into their eyes and voices, he said, "Have you not read the Bible? Do you not know that the Christ must suffer all these things? What is meant by the psalm where it is written, 'They pierced my hands and my feet?' What is meant by the chapter in Isaiah where it is written, 'He is despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed?'" The words which he said, and the voice in which he spoke, impressed them deeply. "You thought," he

said, "that Jesus could not be the Christ, the Son of God, because he died upon the cross. But you see that holy men of old time, looking forward to the time of Christ, saw that he must be put to death. It has all happened as the prophets said. Yes, and more also: Christ dies, but he rises again from the dead." Their hearts glowed within them as he spoke.

So they drew near to the village where they lived, and as they came to a parting of the ways he made as though he would have gone farther, but they urged him, saying, "Abide with us; for it is towards evening, and the day is far spent." And he went in to tarry with them. And it came time for supper, and they sat down together, Cleopas and his friend, and the women and the little children of the family, and the stranger. They asked the stranger to say the blessing. And as he said it he took bread and brake it and gave to them. And their eyes were opened, and they knew him. It was the Lord himself! And he vanished out of their sight.

Then they rose up immediately and hastened

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THE SUPPER AT EMMAUS

back to Jerusalem, but there were no more tears in their eyes as they ran along the road.

That night the disciples were together with the doors fast shut, for they were still afraid of the Pharisees and Sadducees. Only ten of them were present, for Judas was dead, and Thomas was so overcome with grief and disappointment that he stayed by himself, thinking his own thoughts, asking only to be left alone. The ten were sitting at the table, having finished their supper. There was still some fish on the table, and some honey in the comb. Peter was talking excitedly. "I have seen him," he was saying. "He came and spoke to me. He is alive." Then there was a sound of hurrying steps upon the stairs, and a quick knock at the door, and when one said, "Who is it? what do you want?" a voice said, "This is Cleopas of Emmaus, with great news. Open the door." Cleopas and his friend were admitted, and the door was locked again. And they told what things were done in the way, and how he was known of them in breaking of bread.

And as they thus spake, — Cleopas telling his story, and the ten crying, "He is risen indeed and hath appeared to Peter," — Jesus himself stood in the midst. The doors were shut, and stayed shut. He had not entered by the doors. He appeared, as he had vanished at Emmaus, suddenly, out of the air. "Peace be unto you," he said. But they were terrified and affrighted, supposing that they had seen a spirit. And he showed them his hands and his feet, with the marks of the nails, and taking fish and honey ate before them to make them know then that it was indeed himself. "Peace be unto you," he said again; "as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you." There he stood, in their sight, the risen Lord. He who had died was now alive.

XI

THE VISION OF THE SEVEN FISHERMEN

Our Lord had now shown himself alive to most of the apostles, and to a few others. They were all able to say that they had seen him face to face. But there were two who would not believe, even on the word of all these honest persons.

One of these unbelievers was James, our Lord's brother. James had never believed that Jesus was the Son of God. He believed, indeed, that the King would come, the King of Glory, but that his own brother with whom he had played as a boy was the King of Glory seemed to him impossible. James had not appeared when Jesus left the carpenter's bench and began to preach. At one time, he had convinced himself and his brothers that Jesus was out of his right mind, and they had gone to bring him back. None of his brothers believed. They all loved him: we may be sure

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of that. But their love did not make them his disciples. All this must have grieved our Lord. He must often have remembered his unbelieving family in the midst of his new friends. And now that he had come back out of the grave, one of the first persons whom he sought was James. What he said, and what James answered, we know not; but after that our Lord's brothers were always found in the company of the disciples.

The other unbeliever was Thomas. He had, as we have seen, a gloomy way of thinking, and was always sure that things would turn out for the worse instead of for the better. "Let us go with him," he said once, "that we may die with him." Thomas had seen our Lord upon the cross, and he could think of nothing but the nails in his hands and feet and the gash of the spear in his side. The two came and said, "Thomas, last night at supper while you were away we saw the Lord. He came into the room where we were and blessed us." Thomas answered, "I know that you all think so, but it is something which I cannot

possibly believe on any evidence except that of my own senses. Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe." So the days went on till Sunday came again; and that evening as they sat together, and Thomas with them, still having the doors tight shut, again came Jesus, and appeared of a sudden in the midst of them, saying as before, "Peace be unto you." Then he said to Thomas, "Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side; and be not faithless but believing." And Thomas tried the tests. Down he fell upon his face, crying, "My Lord and my God." And Jesus said, "Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed; blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed."

Sometimes even those who saw him did not believe; for though he was the same friend and master who had died upon the cross, and had in his body the marks of his suffering,

yet he was mysteriously different. Two disciples could walk with him and hear him talk and yet have no idea who he was. He appeared and vanished. He lived, but the new life was not a continuation of the old. He did not come back as Lazarus did, having the body of our common human nature. He had now, as St. Paul says, a spiritual body. Though when we say that, we are not much wiser than we were before, for we do not know what a spiritual body is.

At last there came a time when days and days passed by without a sight of him. Even on Sunday, which they were beginning to call the Lord's day, he did not visit them. When he would come again, they did not know; and he had given them no directions. They knew not what to think or what to do. One day, Peter and Thomas, and Nathaniel, and James and John, and two others, all fishermen, were talking together, and Peter said, "I am going a-fishing." The others answered, "We also will go with thee." They could not bear to be idle; they would return to their old trade. So

they got into a boat and went out upon the lake, as they had done so many times before, and fished all night with a torch in the stern of the boat to attract the fish. But they caught nothing. And it began to be morning. A faint light appeared in the east, the water changed from black to gray, and a dim line of shore appeared.

And on the shore somebody stood and called. "Boys," he cried, as one says to fishermen, "have you caught anything?" They answered, "No." He said, "Cast the net on the right side of the boat." So they cast the net on the right side of the boat, and so many fish came into it that they could not pull it over the side. Immediately John said, "It is the Lord." And Peter, when he heard that, fastened his coat about him and jumped into the water, and so swam ashore. The others rowed the boat, dragging the net with fishes. As soon, then, as they were come to land they saw a fire of coals burning on the shore, and fish laid upon it, and bread, and the stranger standing beside it. The stranger said, "Bring some

of the fish which you have caught." Peter went to help and they drew the net to land, and counted the great fishes, a hundred and fifty and three; and for all there were so many, yet was the net not broken. The stranger then invited them to breakfast. "Come," he said, "and eat of the meal which I have prepared," and he gave them bread and fish.

All this time they looked at him, and at one another, and then back at him. He seemed a very friendly stranger. There was something familiar, too, about him, stranger though he was. Indeed, they all knew that he who stood beside the fire and fed them was the Lord himself. But was it the Lord, indeed? They wished to say, "Who are you?" but they dared not ask the question. It was the Lord, but they did not know him as they would have known Andrew or Matthew. They recognized him with their hearts rather than with their eyes.

So they breakfasted together on the sand. And after they had eaten, the Lord turned to Peter. "Simon," he said, calling him by his

other name, "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these?" "Yes, Lord," said Peter, "thou knowest that I love thee." But he did not claim to be a better lover than the others: he had learned the hard lesson of humility. The Lord said, "Feed my Lambs." The fisherman was to be a shepherd; the lambs which he was to feed were to be the little children of the flock of Christ. He was to show his love by his great care for them.

Then the Lord said a second and a third time, "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me?" And when Peter again assured him of his love, he answered, "Feed my sheep." Thus Peter, who had three times denied his master, spoke now these three times to tell him that he truly loved him.

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XII

THE KING RETURNS TO HEAVEN

So forty days passed by. Some of them were days of wonder, when the Lord came and talked with the disciples. Others were days of expectation, when the disciples waited and he did not come. Indeed, they knew not at what moment or in what place he might appear. Now he was suddenly present with them in Judea, then in Galilee. Sometimes one of them walking by the lake or going to pray in the silence of the hills, would find the Lord standing beside him. On one occasion he made himself known to more than five hundred disciples at once, most of whom were still living when St. Paul was writing his epistles.

One purpose of these appearances was to make them certain that he who had died upon the cross had come to life again. They saw him face to face, and heard him speak. Thus they knew beyond all doubt that he was indeed the Son of God. He who had lived so

many quiet years at Nazareth, and had been a carpenter there, earning his bread like other men; he who had gone out preaching the kingdom of God, and had taken them with him, treating them as dear, familiar friends; he whom the Pharisees and Sadducees had hated and had brought at last to the death of the cross, — he was the Son of God. He was the Word of God; that is, by him God spoke. And the Word was God. In him, their friend, God dwelt here on earth. They had not understood it. When his enemies had seized him, his disciples had forsaken him and fled. But now, seeing that death had no dominion over him, they cried with Thomas, "My Lord and my God."

Another purpose of the appearances was to assure them that death is not the end. It seems the end. The body dies, and so far as we can see, the soul dies with it. There is no voice nor answer after that. What we need is a clear word from beyond the grave. We want somebody to come back and tell us. Christ came back, declaring that death is not a wall

but a door. After we die we shall live again; he said, "Because I live, ye shall live also."

Then he gave his disciples their last instructions. They were to go now and teach what he had taught them. What they had heard in secret, they were to proclaim openly. Those who received the teaching and believed, and desired to live in the new way, they were to baptize. Thus they were to initiate them into a new society. He had already told them how they were to break bread and eat it, and to pour wine and drink it, in remembrance of him. This they were to do at the meetings of the new society.

One day he took them out as far as Bethany. They went again over the familiar way, out of the Jerusalem gate, into the valley which had been to them the valley of the shadow of death, past the Garden of Gethsemane at whose gate they had deserted him, and up the ascent of the Mount of Olives, where palm branches still lay withered by the side of the road. Men who met them saw eleven disciples. The Master, in the midst of them, they saw not. Only

the disciples, who had the clear vision of faith, saw him. They knew now the answer to the question which one of them had asked, "Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself to us, and not unto the world?"

But there was one matter which still perplexed them. The kingdom of God which they had so long expected, and of which the Lord had said so much, when and how was it to come? Even now they could not get rid of the old notion of a kingdom with a palace and a throne, and a place of power among the nations. So they asked him as they went, "Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?" And he answered, "The time is in the hand of the Father, and it is not for you to know it. But the Kingdom is in your own hearts and in the hearts of those who shall receive your words. You shall be the founders of it. You who to-day are poor, and unknown in the great world, and hated by many men, shall be given power from on high, the power of goodness, and of love, and of the grace of God. You shall be witnesses

unto me, telling how I came, the Son of God, from heaven, to give men life here and hereafter, teaching them to live as I have commanded you, showing my spirit in your lives. And lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."

When he had spoken these things, raising his hands over his disciples in farewell and blessing, while they beheld, he was taken up, and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven, as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel, saying, "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." And the disciples remembered the saying, "A little while, and ye shall not see me; and again, a little while, and ye shall see me, because I go to the Father." They began to understand it. They began to see that the Lord had appeared and disappeared during the forty days to teach them to expect him always and everywhere.

Into the cloud he went, and out of the cloud he comes, the cloud of human need. They fell upon their faces and worshiped the King of Glory. Their hearts were full of faith and love and joy. He had gone away out of sight only to return invisible and to abide with them and with us all forever.

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